

# THREE LECTURES

ON THE

SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

THE MILLENNIUM.

SPIRITUALISM, FROM WHENCE AND WHAT IS IT?

AUT VOX DEI, AUT VOX ET PRÆTEREA NIHIL

AS DELIVERED

IN VARIOUS PLACES, FREE, TO THE WORKING CLASSES.

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BY F. STARR, OF NORWICH,

Author of "TWENTY YEARS OF A TRAVELLER'S LIFE," "MIDSUMMER MORNINGS' DREAM,"

"KEY TO DITTO," "THE COMING MILLENNIUM," "THE CROSS," "LETTERS TO THE  
LATE ROBERT OWEN, OF LANARK," ETC.

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"If an angel or spirit hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God."

ACTS xxiii. 9.

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## To the Commercial Body,

AND ESPECIALLY TO SUCH AS ARE SUBSCRIBERS TO AND GOVERNORS OF THE

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS' BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION.

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WHEN I was first applied to for a "Preface," or "Address," to this little work, my answer was, "I have nothing to add,"—my subject in the six thousand copies of my writings, which, by your assistance, are now in the world, is exhausted, albeit the doctrines they set forth to a firm believer in them never *tires*. Necessity, however, calls for something further from my pen, to account for the abandonment of the project these lectures, in their delivery and publication, originally designed. I had intended the pleasure of circulating them myself amongst you, in my occupation as a commission traveller, over the ground I have recently visited, which, exactly forty years since, I made my first appearance on, and in the course of which it was my intention to deliver them *viva voce*. Whether from want of energy on my part, or the altered circumstances in which I found trade generally, I must leave; certain it is, a continuance of my arrangements would have produced most disastrous results. I have, therefore, acted on the advice of my friends, and, I trust, *timely*, retired from this species of representation. Independently of this necessity, my health has given way, and I feel myself incapable of exertions beyond the exercise of my pen. I had hoped to have ended my days in that theatre of exertion I commenced my career in, but it has been otherwise ordained;

"Man proposes, but God disposes,"

and I bow with submission to His decree.

Notwithstanding the large circulation by your kind aid I have obtained, the subject of a "Second Coming of Christ" is one that meets with little sympathy in a world so essentially immersed

in its concerns, and it has been a question with me whether or not this circulation has been obtained more from the desire to serve me as an individual, than in a firm belief I have been setting forth "sound doctrine." Be it which it may, my grateful thanks are equally due to the charitable feelings you have exhibited towards me, whether as regards my convictions or circumstances, and I thus most heartily tender them. At the same time, in justice to myself, I must add nothing but an imperative sense of DUTY would have induced me to incur the immense labour it has been to me, and the weighty obligations it has laid me under to you, individually and collectively. To have made the commercial room the arena for the discussion of the subject of my works I found utterly impracticable, and, with the exception of one evening in Liverpool, in a company of six commercial gentlemen who showed an intimate acquaintance with it, I never had the opportunity of opening my lips; but the result of that discussion was most gratifying to me, proving, as it did, there are many amongst that important body who find time for reflection upon the subject. Whether this little work may assist them or not I must leave; I shall do what I can to circulate it by posting copies to the different commercial hotels I am familiar with, and if it produces that which I earnestly desire for it, my publisher, Mr. Geo. J. Stevenson, of No. 54, Paternoster Row, London, will attend to any prepaid orders that may be sent him. The copyright of the work I place at the disposal of the Board of Management of "The Commercial Travellers' Benevolent Institution," after the expenses of this edition have been paid, and I do most earnestly hope it may be productive in the end of "a harvest sweet and sure" to that noble refuge for the aged, necessitous, and incapacitated commercial traveller.

F. S.

May, 1867.

\* \* "THE CROSS," *Five Shillings, post free*, published by W. Macintosh, Paternoster Row, London; may be had from him and through all Booksellers; also from the Author, addressed, F. STARR, Norwich. All orders to be prepaid.

## FIRST LECTURE.

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"THE INSTANT COMING OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST, AND THE PREPARATION BY WHICH THE CHURCH CAN BE ENABLED TO MEET HIM."

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MR. CHAIRMAN, CHRISTIAN FRIENDS, AND FELLOW CITIZENS :—  
Before entering upon the subject that is to occupy our attention this evening, I feel it to be a duty I owe to you, my friends, and foes also, (if so be there are any here present) :—for it affords scarcely less presumption against a man that he should have no enemies, as that he should have no friends. There is such an unceasing clash of interests in this world, that an earnest and active disposition must perforce come into conflict, ever and anon, with somebody or other. "A favourite," Gray says, "has no friends;" but the very term implies that he has foes. He is generally of that pliant temperament which never gives offence, because it never inclines before it. He may be an agreeable fellow, but he is never a good one,—a convenient companion, but never a trusted ally. Better I think than such an one is the man who speaks his mind, and calls things by their right names,—a spade a spade, for instance,—as I have done (and *paid for it*); one who lives his life, gives umbrage right and left, and is quite prepared to take the consequences. "Nobody," says a great writer, "should therefore be judged exclusively by the amount of hostility which he may have evoked in the course of his career, provided he can appeal, as a set-off, to a decent list of staunch adherents." Hence I feel it to be a duty I owe to you, as well as to myself, in some measure to explain my reasons for addressing you on a subject that, at this present

time, is being preached from every pulpit in the United Kingdom, where the Church service is in use,—it being what by the Church is called “Advent;” a period of the year set apart by our spiritual rulers as the time when “*The Second Coming of Christ*” is to be more especially considered,—and, as I take it, not to be dwelt upon, excepting in a cursory manner, for the remaining portion of the year,—cry wolf for a certain period, and then, because he does not appear, believe no such thing is expected. Be that as it may, the circumstance of my appearing before you is not on that account, viz. because it is “Advent,” but because I have never been able to put into operation a scheme, or programme, I have for a long period been endeavouring to inaugurate; that is, to establish a Guarantee Fund, to enable me to give Free Lectures to the Working Classes of London, and elsewhere, on the subject of “The Second Coming of Christ,” &c. &c.; such Fund to be under the management of a responsible Committee. In what manner this proposal has been received will be seen by the following letters:—

“Tunbridge Wells, Aug. 17, 1866.

“Lord Shaftesbury is much interested by the letter he has received from Mr. Starr, and by the proposition it contains.

“He would be glad to hear more of the mode of operation that Mr. Starr desires to adopt in furtherance of his important views.”

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“Tunbridge Wells, Aug. 28, 1866.

“Lord Shaftesbury will be happy to pay Two Pounds towards Mr. Starr’s expenses; but he is unwilling to become, in any way, a guarantor of the Fund.”

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“10, Downing Street, Whitehall, 31st August, 1866.

“SIR,—I am desired by Lord Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th instant; and I am to acquaint you that in consequence of the many demands now made upon him, his Lordship is not desirous of contributing to the fund which you are raising for the purpose referred to in your letter.—I am, your obedient servant,

“HERBERT MURRAY.

“Mr. F. Starr.”

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“Buckingham Palace, 6th September, 1866.

“Sir Thomas Biddulph is commanded to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Starr’s letter of the 1st instant, and to express the Queen’s regret that Her Majesty is unable to accede to his request.”

Letters were also received from Miss Burdett Coutts, and others, declining to contribute to the proposed fund ; and I have been obliged, most reluctantly, to abandon the project. My *reasons* for addressing you, I will endeavour, in as short and concise a way as possible, to explain to you.

I have found it impossible to separate myself from the conviction that I have been in a most remarkable and extraordinary manner “ called ” to this office several years ago (whether it be “ delusion ” or not I must leave), and which office I have endeavoured to fulfil, by the agency of my pen, in the various publications I have, at immense labour and great cost to myself and friends, succeeded in circulating (many thousand copies now) ; wherein I have detailed the nature and peculiarities of a “ visitation,” which, to my mind, is as clear an evidence of the intervention of an almighty and invisible power as was ever manifested upon this earth. Many of you here present may have read those works, and formed very different opinions, for I have very little opportunity of knowing what men think of them ;—the press, generally, is silent upon them, although it was exceedingly lavish in its praise of another work I wrote as an *avant courier*, to prove I was neither a fanatic in religion, nor a man of “ dislocated imagination,” as some men are called, who take upon themselves the interpretation of Scripture, and set forth, if not the “ day and the hour,” the YEAR in which our Blessed Lord and Master is to come to this world of ours, “ to judge both the quick and the dead.” Very few persons have ever spoken with me upon the subject of them, and fewer still have written to me ; but in every instance where they have so condescended, my replies to their objections have ended in an offer of assistance, coupled with the earnest (I have no doubt) expression, “ May God guide and strengthen you.” At the same time that I am thus impelled as it were to act, I cannot but feel deeply sensible of my defects and deficiencies, which you must, by this time, have discovered in me ; and before I proceed further I must throw myself on your kind indulgence and forbearance, begging you to look with charity on these imperfections, and rather receive them as an additional proof of the sincerity of my convictions, in being thus impelled to *act*,—for unless that charity is exercised to the fullest extent, I fear very

much that I shall fail to interest you in that which I have further to say ; for, like Moses of old, when he was suddenly called to a work he felt himself so incompetent for (which you will read of in the 4th chapter of Exodus, and the 10th verse), I am not “eloquent,” but am “slow” and imperfect in my “speech,” and of a “slow tongue ;” and have, moreover, given further evidence of a similarity of feeling he had when he said, “Send, I pray thee, by the hand of whom thou wilt send,” (v. 13) ; for I have endeavoured all I could to excuse myself, on the plea of these imperfections, till I can no longer conscientiously hide myself like a second Jonah, but, at whatever cost to myself, do what in me lies, ere the lamp of my zeal has burned out, to warn my fellow man of the near approach of that great event the eyes of Christ’s faithful people are daily looking for, —**HIS SECOND COMING IN GLORY.**

Having said thus much on the personal, as it affects *me*, I will now, with your permission, take the words at the head of the bills convening this meeting into consideration, viz. : “The *instant* coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the preparation by which the Church may be enabled to meet Him.”

You may not have noticed the fact, but the passage is marked by inverted commas, intimating the words are not mine, but borrowed from another source ; and it occurred to me, as doubtless it did to those who originated the startling and sensational announcement, that it would be the means of getting together a vast assemblage of people, especially when they were to be addressed gratuitously in such grand mansions as “St. James’s Hall,” “The Hanover Square Rooms,” “St. Martin’s Hall,” and other places equally grand and magnificent ; by persons who did not appear as clergymen or belonging to any sect or denomination, but as “*Esquires*” and “*Lords of the Creation* ;” and they were not far out in their calculations, for so long as it lasted they had overwhelming congregations ; but it was only for a short time, the expense was too heavy even for a rich Church to keep it up for any lengthened period ; besides which the people began to find out the motive, which I made it my study to inquire into, and they, as you I have no doubt will do when I tell you the result of my inquisitiveness, soon formed their own conclusions ; and I greatly fear, instead of establishing

the belief in a "Second Coming of Christ," only aggravated the infidelity of many in the doctrine of any other king to reign over them save the one and her descendants whom, in the spirit of sacred song, we have just called upon God to bless. A great writer on these subjects says : " Perhaps there is nothing more hateful in the eyes of worldly men than the prospect of a *Divine King*. As long as the devil is the god of the world, as he now is, the world is satisfied. There is more variety in the government of the devil ; it gives scope to men's passions and inclinations ; keeps them in an agreeable uncertainty and delightful tremor. No one can ever tell what to-morrow may bring forth,—a murder, a war, a revolution, any thing to prevent the stagnation of ideas. The dull monotony of a perfect government appears at first sight intolerable ; and, still worse, the fixed unerring cabinet of the skies seems a dreary substitute for the ever changing cabinets of the earth, which go right by chance, and wrong by necessity. Against the government of the Lord and his saints all mankind will take up arms until the rebellion has been crushed at the decisive battle of Armageddon. Then the Kingdom of Heaven will be established, not by the preaching of the Gospel, but by force of arms. You might preach for ever without setting up a kingdom,—you might as well hope to preach down an earthquake as to preach down the furious passions of the whole world. We have been boasting of our success for 1800 years, and see what a kingdom we have got. Force of arms alone either will or can establish the Kingdom of Heaven. Preaching the Gospel only serves to gather out of the world its future king, and to that end missionary labours are slowly consummating that event." But to return to the wording of these placards and handbills so industriously circulated in and about London, and the effect it was intended to produce. I forget the exact day of the month, but it was some time in June or July of this year, on a Sunday evening, at St. James's Hall, I attended with at least 2,000 other people, many of them, as it afterwards proved, expecting, like myself, from such a startling announcement as "THE INSTANT COMING OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, AND THE PREPARATION BY WHICH THE CHURCH CAN BE ENABLED TO MEET HIM," (for that is the exact wording of the bills and placards,) looked for some

further evidence of that "coming" than is set forth in the word of God; whether true or false, I think they were entitled to expect some relation of the kind, for to me it looked as though they had had some telegraphic communication of the event, in this age of miracles and wonders, so prevalent that, "if possible, it would deceive the very elect." Instead of which the lecturer, or whatever character he might be recognised in, entered into a tirade of abuse of the Church of England, denouncing Bishop Colenso, and the authors of "Essays and Reviews," and bringing forward every possible argument to prove that it was a false Church, and ended a very powerful address by liberal quotations from St. Luke's Gospel, and the 1st and 2nd Epistles to the Thessalonians, all of which the majority of his hearers were perhaps as well acquainted with as he himself was, though not so well able to "paint the lily" or "adorn the rose," for that style of preaching of the present day, I am sorry to say, prevails more than any other in the mere platitudes of written sermons. At the conclusion of his address he intimated he should be happy to answer any questions that might be put to him, and for that purpose would receive company in an adjoining room. I accordingly went, but in the crowd of persons anxious to hear and know more, I was too late to gain an audience, and had therefore to remain a spectator and listener to the strangest questions ever put to mortal being upon so grave a subject. At last, however, the poor gentleman got so irritated by the cross-questioning he was subjected to by a "canny Scotchman," who said he was "caught" by the "instant coming," that he ended the colloquy by saying, somewhat petulantly, "I suppose if I had said it would take place next Wednesday morning at about three o'clock you would have been better satisfied." This brought up a host of questioners, and a perfect hornet's nest, all requiring to be answered at one time; and I left the Babel, after giving one of my books to a gentleman belonging to the party arranging these meetings, with a request he would give it to the lecturer, and let me hear from him at his convenience; this he did, which I may, by and by, perhaps, have occasion to refer to. My inquiries, however, did not end here, for I very soon ascertained who the parties were originating this "movement," and what I considered was meant in their announcement

as "*The Church*,"—for, as you will perceive, the words are "by which *the Church* can be enabled to meet him ;" and as he had denounced the Church of England as being *the Church*, I, of course, was left to infer he considered his own to be "*the Church*." After inquiries, I found they went by the name of "Irvingites," although, as one of their leaders afterwards told me, they did not recognise themselves by that cognomen, but called themselves "*The Apostolic Church*," that is to say, the Church as it existed in the days of St. Paul and the other apostles, when some, less fortunate, "wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, destitute, afflicted, and tormented," whilst the richer portion of the Church gave *one tenth* of their possessions for the support of their poorer brethren, constituting the Church of Christ upon earth at that period. But how the comparison and identity was to be maintained I did not see in their ceremonies, excepting that to meet the heavy expense there must be attendant upon them, the venerable gentleman told me was defrayed by the *one tenth* of the incomes of the members,— "a settler" for me, so far as I was concerned, however moved I might have been by the solemnity of their proceedings, and splendour of their pageantry ; for I was interested so far (or curious, perhaps, is the better term) as to attend one of their ceremonies in their church in Gordon Square, (a building purchased for the late Edward Irving, whom I once remember to have heard in Hatton Garden, and whose ministration helped me on in the downward road I was then walking in,—viz.: by the light of my own reason,—for I could see nothing in the mad gesticulation of the "unknown tongue" but the ravings of a fanatic, and in his followers poor silly men and women, who were as ignorant of the matter as myself,) and where, if any of you, my hearers, have any desire to see a little better specimen of play-acting than you can meet with in St. Lawrence Church, here in Norwich, or outstrip in gorgeous vestments and imposing ceremonies that which you see on a small scale (comparatively) in our Romanist Churches, when you are next in London, go to Gordon Square, and you can gratify that desire to your heart's content ; for there you may have everything *Roman*, so far as bowings, crossings, genuflexions, processions, and priests are concerned, with incense and burning lamps enough to stifle you ;

but if you require holy water and wafers, those you must take. And this is "the Church" that has adopted for its motto and watchword the startling and sensational announcement, "The *instant* coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," instead of the more scriptural and calmer announcement made by THE Church, as we consider it, viz. :—"The *Second Coming* of our Lord."

You will perhaps say, "Why have *you* adopted it?" and is it not for the purpose of drawing attention to yourself and your books? And it is a very fair question to ask, and my answer to it is plainly—No! I did it for this purpose, that I knew I should have an opportunity of *speaking* upon the matter, that I might show what other "Churches" were doing, and that if our "Church" were not equally alive, in all probability they might lose the chance of obtaining *new* adherents, if they did not lose some of their old ones; and these are the views I expressed to Lord Shaftesbury in my communication to him, and which he has honoured so far as to call them "important." So far as a "movement" of this kind may affect the Church as an Establishment, I have nothing to do. I am not attached to it in any other way than as a humble worshipper in it, and the simpler its service and ceremonies are conducted, the better it accords with my views and ideas; but I *have* to do with the *doctrine* it professes to establish itself upon, and I very much question whether that doctrine will be in any way advanced, when, upon inquiries, the grand movers in the scheme are found to be men, not "dressed in sheep's clothing," which may be called plain black, for this coat of mine was once a sheep's clothing, (that is, if there is no cotton in it,) but who are arrayed in white, and gold, and scarlet, and purple, and fine linen, and such an array of priests and officials, that in one of their Churches, we had more priests than people; I say I doubt very much in my own mind whether the doctrine of the "Second Coming of Christ," is at all likely to be advanced amongst the heathen and infidel world by such dispensers; and to those who have already embraced the doctrine, it gives a very wide margin to doubt their sincerity; and whether or not its advocacy has not a more direct tendency to obtain adherents to that erratic (as I consider it) form of worship, which may be summed up in two words, POSTURE and IMPOSTURE. It seems to me a great pity that men should only half do a

thing. Why not, if they mean "Rome," go over to Rome at once? Don't lose both Protestantism and Romanism; make up your minds for one or the other. It is far more honest, for I look upon a Roman Catholic as a thoroughly honest man in his convictions, however much I may differ from him in opinion, and would infinitely prefer battling with him, than with one of this hybrid genus, who are neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, nor good red herring. Just as I would say to the sinner who is all for this world, and won't have "this man to reign over him," as the Jews declared of old, "Not this man, but Barabbas;" I say to him, don't lose both this world and the next too; "go the whole hog," whilst you are here, and don't debar yourself from its fullest enjoyments, by temporising with Christianity, just a little for God, and the rest for myself; pay no heed to the loving appeal of a loving Father, "My son, give me thy whole heart," but give your whole heart where your treasure really is. But to return to this "Instant Coming," which having disposed of as a "wresting of Scripture," and as I believe to serve the purpose of an under current, you will perhaps ask me, "If it is not in your opinion to be 'instant,' when *will it be*?" for I can assure you I have been seriously asked by many Christian people who have read my works, "When do you *expect* it to be?" as though I had more information upon that point than any other individual, because I had written upon the subject. One most respectable gentleman, clad in garments cut to the greatest nicety, with a hat to correspond fastened up at the side, which intimated, "Look at me; I am a dignitary of the Church and have authority," took me somewhat severely to task, and tauntingly asked why I had "foisted such a lot of 'mad rubbish,' on the public." "Is not," said the worthy functionary, "the machinery of the Church of England sufficient to circulate the doctrine of a 'Second Coming,' without *your* interfering?" I took his rebuke calmly, as I do all attacks that are made upon me. I fulfil the Scripture in that respect; when they smite me on one cheek, I offer the other, and having done all that is required in that respect, I turn to, and fight it out. You may say that is not Scripture. Well, if not exactly so, it is Spurgeon's Scripture (who you remember came down here to win souls to Christ, as I supposed, but it appeared afterwards he had another object, for I heard him myself declare

that if he had thought the paltry subscription of £35 was all he would have got, he wouldn't have come at all.) As calmly as I could, I replied, "Yes, perhaps it is ; and if so, why are you constantly crying out for 'more reapers ?' Why is it you complain so bitterly at the paucity of numbers willing to go forth as missionaries ? Is it not, think you, that they are all waiting for some such a comfortable berth in the ship as you appear to have obtained ?—*large pay and little work*. To their honour be it said, many, very many, have left home, and friends, and kindred, and country, and have even given their *lives* to the cause of Christ ; but what are they in numbers compared to the demand from all parts of the world, 'Come over and help us ?' Yet, notwithstanding, as you ask me a plain question, I will give you a plain answer. Your machinery *is* sufficient, but it has grown rusty, and it is sadly out of order : you are quarrelling amongst yourselves, and you know what our Lord himself has said upon that point, 'A house divided against itself must fall.' And as you have further asked me, *when* I expect the coming of our Lord, I will tell you plainly, had it not been for that 'visitation of God,' which *you* have so charitably designated 'mad rubbish,' I should not have believed in a *personal* advent at all ; for, according to my belief in the matter, not one in a thousand amongst your fraternity believe that it ever will take place. I knew one who claimed to be an Evangelical preacher, who pronounced a 'personal reign,' to be 'personal humbug.' I sat under his teaching for many years, but he is gone to his rest, and now is better informed upon the subject, doubtless, for he was a sincere believer." The worthy divine (for such he was) collapsed without condescending to continue the colloquy, as most of them do if you hit them hard. You, my hearers, doubtless are of equally inquiring turns of mind, and would gladly receive any information on the point, so that when He *does* come you may be ready to receive him, if that information is reliable, and based on the authority of the word of God ; let us then see what it is that word conveys to us. And here, just handy for my purpose, is a little work that saves me the trouble of asking you to turn to your Bibles, for as you see, he has taken that labour upon himself, and extracted all the texts that bear upon the subject, and has printed them in due form. I will read them to you, for it is by

these "signs," we are to form our conclusions, as our Lord himself informs us. "When you see these *things* (signs) BEGIN to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." Luke xxi. 25, 26. Now how do these signs bear upon that which many interpreters of prophecy designate "the Great Year 1866-7," amongst them "Dr. Cumming," who, according to another authority I have here by my side, says he has declared "the Millennium will commence in 1867,"—a thing, he further goes on to say, "absolutely impossible, since the whole reign of the last Antichrist is to precede the beginning of the Millennial time. It requires no spirit of prophecy, but only a slight acquaintance with the book of Revelation to foretell, that Dr. C. will be wrong again, not for the second, but for the twentieth time. The memorable instance of Sebastopol and Dr. C. is the most recent example of prophetic failure, and another instance will occur within three years more."

This was written, in 1864, by a clergyman, living at Torquay, who, without a name, has been before the public as a prophetic writer the last twenty years, although I believe his name to be Purdon. It seems a strange thing to me, that a man should withhold his name, when writing upon matters of such immense importance to us who are of an inquiring turn of mind, but confessedly unable to read the word of God as they do, in its original Greek and Hebrew; but so it is, for here is another, without a name, but a clergyman. Fixing an approximate time, he says he is justified in so doing—and he makes it out 1866-7, in accordance with Dr. C.'s prophecy; whilst the clergyman I have just quoted from says, "It would be highly improper, as well as unwise, to fix upon the year 1866-7 as an undoubted era in the fulfilment of PROPHECY. It is never lawful to fix dates and times, and all the attempts that have been made at doing so have failed." But let us hear clergyman No. 1. He says, "It is a matter of fact that TWENTY-ONE PROPHECIC DATES have already been fulfilled, and there are SEVEN which predict the time of the

destruction of Popery, the resurrection of the righteous, and the second advent of the Messiah terminating in 1866-7;" and he very pertinently adds, "And why should not the dates of these events and of the second advent be given, when the dates of the crucifixion and enthronement of the Messiah, of the deluge, of the captivity in Babylon, of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of other great events have been so plainly given, without any exception? If signs and dates preceded the *cross* of Christ, why should not signs and dates precede His second coming with power and great glory?" That is a question, my friends, hard to answer by one totally unacquainted, as many of you doubtless are, like myself, with these knotty questions, especially when they are to be answered from the original Greek and Hebrew, which languages, so far as I have been able to gather, no two parties agree in every sense of the word, for even the very "number of the Beast," which is to determine the whole matter for us unlearned ones, is a disputed point, on which no two interpreters of scripture prophecy entirely agree, which I shall endeavour to show you, if not this evening, at some future period, when I shall have the pleasure of addressing you, but which would be premature at this point of our inquiry, for we have not yet done with the great year 1866-7, and how far these signs bear upon it; for what with the cattle plague, the Fenian movement in Ireland, the great and disastrous panic, the plague of cholera, the terrible scourge of war, and, above all, the wonderful, rapid, and irresistible triumph of Protestant Prussia against the gigantic military establishment of Popish Austria, which collapsed in ten days; and the regeneration of Italy and Germany; to say nothing of the completion of that gigantic enterprise, the Atlantic cable, which I take to be as great a "sign" as any—viz. subduing the earth;—we may indeed call it the Great Year 1866-7. In addition to which, we have yet to witness the fall of Papal Rome, by the removal of the Pope from his temporal dominions, which, according to the accounts our newspapers give us, will take place this very day week, and in connection with which other prophecies are to be fulfilled. Hence it seems to me, according to other testimonies by acknowledged interpreters, impossible to separate these occurrences from the conviction that a great change is impending, and for

which all Christians ought, not only to be making inquiries, but, so far as in them lies, preparing themselves and others for the suddenness of an event all scripture and all interpreters of prophecy concur in saying shall overtake them as a "thief in the night."

When I say "acknowledged interpreters of prophecy," it must be taken advisedly, and in a limited sense; but I cannot bring myself to conclude otherwise in the instance I am about to refer to. I allude to the author of "The Coming Struggle," which pamphlet doubtless many of you have heard of, if not read,—for I had not read it myself until it had attained the enormous circulation of 186,000, that was, the 186th edition, of 1,000 copies each; and I therefore take it for granted his opinions met with acceptance *generally*, if not *universally*. I have a letter by my side from him, having had much correspondence with him, and dedicated a work to him, which I published in 1854, entitled "The Vision of Midsummer Mornings' Dream," which, with your permission, I will now read to you. But who the author of "The Coming Struggle" is I don't know from Adam; but he is not Dr. Cumming, to whom the pamphlet has been attributed, for at the time he was corresponding with me from Edinburgh, Dr. Cumming, to my certain knowledge, was in London. It seems to me to be important, at this present juncture, if we are to be guided in our views by men who set themselves, as it were, apart from the world for the consideration of questions of such high and important nature as these we are now engaged in considering unquestionably are.

"Edinburgh, December 14th, 1853.

"DEAR SIR,—I am duly in receipt of your last, and, according to request, return the enclosed, wishing you all success in your literary labours. Had I time, there are one or two things I should like to touch upon; but, having two monthly magazines to edit, besides other literary, or rather theological, works in which I am engaged, my time is very much taken up at present. I cannot, however, forbear alluding to one point in your book, which I beg you will reconsider, and modify, if not withdraw altogether. I refer to your idea of those who 'profess' to set aside a day or a year for the beginning of the Millennium, or second coming of Christ. They are, you say, 'false prophets and impostors' (page 136). This is strong language, and I feel it all the more as it applies to myself.

"You are not alone, however, in holding that it is impossible to fix any date; but I doubt not that all who do so ground their opinions on the words of

Christ—'Of that day and hour knoweth no man—no, not the angels of heaven; but my Father only;' and again, 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.' Now I admit this was quite true at the time the words were uttered; but you and the others seem to forget that the volume of Revelation was not then complete. Read the first verse of the first chapter of John's Revelation, and you will find that that strange book contains the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him (*after he ascended from Mount Olivet*) to show unto His servant, and through him to the church, things which must shortly come to pass. Now, among the things thus revealed was the date of the rise and fall of the Papacy—especially of its *fall*; and Paul tells us that fall will be occasioned by 'the breath of his mouth and the brightness of *his coming*.' Hence the fall of the Papacy, at the end of 1,260 years, and the coming of Christ, take place at the same *day and hour*. I grant that very few will understand this, because we are told that the Son of Man will come as a thief; but this will not be because he did not tell '*when*' he would come. You say (page 136), 'It may be to-morrow; no man can tell.' Had you studied prophecy thoroughly, you never would have wrote that sentence. It *cannot* be to-morrow, unless prophecy is fulfilled,—and we know that not one jot or tittle shall fail, but *all* shall be fulfilled.

"Trusting that you will reconsider this part of your subject,

"I remain, dear Sir, in great haste, yours very truly,

"THE AUTHOR OF 'THE COMING STRUGGLE.'"

Now, all I have to say on that letter is this—I adhere to what I have written, that no man can tell the day or the hour, and be right at the same time—for many have professed to tell the year, if not the hour and the day. 1842 and 1846 were years especially marked as the period when this dispensation was to close. Matthew Habershon in particular designated the latter; but all I have read and had correspondence with think the present year will fully disclose the event. I am not of that opinion; but when I said, "It may be to-morrow; no man can tell,"—I did so because the spiritual teachers I sat under declared the same thing; and as I had not then sufficiently studied the question for myself, I thought I could not be far wrong in stating the same thing my teachers had done; but if the author of the "Coming Struggle" be right, that "all scripture must first be fulfilled," then must first "the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea," before the end shall come; and if in this sense he is right, then comes the question, Does the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth, or will it, in 1866-7, as the waters cover the sea? for till that is accomplished, there will be no second advent, if I interpret the words of the Lord Jesus

himself correctly ; and thus it is written, as delivered from the mouth of the Lord himself, as he sat upon the Mount of Olives,—“ And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached unto all the world, for a witness unto all nations ; and then shall the end come.” (Luke xxiv. 14.) And with that “ foregone conclusion,” I dare say many here present have come, and many more for the like reason have stayed away, thinking there is no more information to be obtained or elicited on the point, and that so far as the gospel being, in the year 1866–7, preached “ as a witness in all the world,” missionary labours in that respect are yet in their infancy. But is this really the case? I have heard ministers of the gospel declare that the scriptures have been printed in every known language on the face of the globe. Whether such is the case I do not pretend to know for certain, but I take it for granted that it is so. But has it been “ preached” in every known tongue? I doubt it much ; and if so, then the fulfilment of that prophecy is yet in abeyance—“ still beginning, never ending ”—and remains to be consummated, and, *per se*, “ the time of the end,” so far as our *human* perceptions enable us to discover, remains as problematical as ever. The exertions of missionary societies, doubtless, have been very energetic, and large sums of money have been expended—absorbed greatly in the machinery of men employed to carry out the glad tidings ; but what is it for the Lord’s work, compared to the fabulous sums bestowed upon worldly matters? Without entering into particulars, or blaming this or that individual or party for expending vast sums on frivolity or vanity, what is the comparative amount dedicated to the Lord’s work, in reference to His command, “ Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel,”—and that amount squandered, I may say, on the pleasures of this life? Is it not a mere flea-bite, in comparison? and think you the Lord will wait the accomplishment of that event by human agency, when he sees the lukewarmness of a slumbering clergy, who are “ neither hot nor cold?” In one sense, they have shown themselves “ hot ” enough—in quarrelling amongst themselves ; and “ cold ” enough, in so far as their efforts have extended in preaching the gospel ; but in this respect they have acted, with your aid and assistance, in sending forth a book which in all probability not one in a hundred reads (as is the case with myself in what I have

published); and when they *do* read it, if they read our language at the same time, they find, in the various interpretations that writers have put upon different passages, that we are very far from a unanimous opinion upon it ourselves. Hence, unless it is accompanied by preachers and teachers in every known language, the heathen will come, I fear, to a very unsatisfactory conclusion respecting it.

Interpreters of prophecy are very free with the Book of Revelation in determining "the time of the end," as I have shown you in the letter I have just read, but have they not overlooked that message to the Church of Laodicea in the third chapter, 15th and 16th verses, of that mysterious book? "I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Many readers of the word of God incline to the belief that the Church of the Laodiceans applies to the Church of the present day; and are there not concurrent events and circumstances to warrant such a conclusion? for where is the true Church of Christ to be found? Not in the outward ceremonies we are so painfully witnessing, nor in the splitting up of sects of almost all denominations.\* The Church of England, where is it? What with Rome *real*, and Rome *sham*, it is difficult to say of the two which is the Church of England. Right and left it is assailed; even here, within the walls of our own city, but in Great Babylon it is a myth, and unless the Master himself soon come to put the House in order, it will fall, fall, fall, and "great will be the fall thereof." But He is coming! God be praised! and that soon! The Spirit of the Lord is abroad in the earth, —notwithstanding that Satan comes with a counterfeit; it is permeating all countries, and winning its countless millions, by the "still small voice" whispering comfort to the afflicted; it is finding its way to the mansions of the great, as well as to the hovel of the starving mechanic; and in the majesty of its

\* "In Ireland, amongst a population of 19,000, 14,000 are split into 113 different sects, all calling themselves the Apostolic Church, or the true Church."—(Daily Telegraph, Feb. 20, 1864.) But of what avail is a feeble protest in this age of *liberty*? Mankind seems determined to acknowledge obedience to no creed whatever, but such as their own imaginations may suggest.

strength will bring Pentecostian numbers "out of darkness into marvellous light," and will, ere long, emancipate millions from the spiritual bondage of the *empty* "confessional," with as sure a certainty as the "movement" of the present day will free the *working-man* from the *political bondage* by which he has been kept fettered and bound down for ages, if ye are but true to yourselves; legally working in faith, hope, and unity; and not suffering the outbreak of popular indignation to have its vent in acts of demolition, acts which, however excusable from a sense of oppression, only give the enemy double power over you. That "voice" is abroad in the land, with powerful advocacy, far more powerful than the sword or the needle gun; you may not yet have heard it, but it will *surely* come to you. You remember the story of the gifted maid of *Lucknow*, as she flew, rather than walked, amongst the ranks of the beleaguered camp, and endeavoured to inspire hope in the hearts of the famished soldiers, and the perishing of her own sex—poor women and children dying daily of want of the necessities of life, "Dinna, ye hear?" "Dinna, ye hear?" but they heard not a sound, and only looked on the poor wasted form of the starved maiden as a maniac, brought to the very verge of madness by the famine of a protracted siege; and only shook their heads, and drooped despairing eyelids, as she went on and on, from rank to rank, with her inspiriting cry, "Dinna ye hear?" persevering in faith that God had opened her ears to the sound of the "Deliverer." Hour after hour passed away, and still her cry was "*Dinna ye hear?*" but they heard not, their ears had been stopped. Even Christian men, (and there were many amongst that brave phalanx of England's defenders,) their "hands hanged down," and "the feeble knees gave way," and they said in their hearts, "God hath forgotten to be gracious; we have been disobedient, and now he laughs at our calamity, he mocks when our fear cometh." But not so the Spirit-enlightened maiden; her cry was still, "Dinna ye hear? oh! dinna ye hear?" till at last, soft upon the wings of the morning, came the sounds of the shrill fife, the booming bagpipe, and the spirit-stirring drum, and then the old, old strains so familiar to their ears,

"The Campbells are coming, are coming, are coming,  
The Campbells are coming, ava!"

became as clear and distinct to them as it was long before to the gifted maiden. *Then* came the wild shout of joy, and uprose the despairing camp, with hearts of gladness and gratitude, to welcome, with open arms their redeemer and deliverer, the brave old Campbell. *And so it is now.* God's saints and angels are on the earth, whose ears he has opened to the joyful sound of the chariot-wheels of their great Deliverer from a far more powerful enemy than plague, pestilence, and famine, which but destroy the body; even from the great enemy of souls, whose long dominion is fast drawing to its close; and they convey the glad tidings in songs of triumph, on mountain and on valley, in the halls of the rich, and in the dwellings of the poor, in accents that shall soon make not only this hall ring with the sound, but the arches of Heaven itself shall echo the joyful song of jubilee :—\*

“ Ride on ! Ride on ! in majesty !  
Triumphant never more to die :  
O Christ ! thy vict'ry now begins  
O'er captive death and mortal sins.

Ride on ! Ride on ! in majesty ;  
The winged squadrons of the sky  
Look on with glad and wond'ring ken,  
To see thy reign on earth with men.

Ride on ! Ride on ! in majesty,  
Thy sceptre, grandly won, is nigh,  
Thy Father on his sapphire throne,  
Beholds his own anointed Son.

Ride on ! Ride on in majesty !  
Triumphant, never more to die,  
O Christ ! thy reign will now begin,  
O'er captive death and conquered sin.”

I had prepared a paper in which I proposed to take into consideration some of that “ mad rubbish ” before alluded to, and characterised by my worthy ecclesiastical friend of the “ looped-up bonnet ; ” but I find the time will not allow of me carrying through my intentions fully, inasmuch as it will involve a comparison with the conclusions of another gentleman of “ dislocated

\* At this point and peroration, the choir took up the strain to the new millennial hymn, “ Ride on ! ” the effect of which was perfectly electrical, and produced an expression of feeling on the part of the audience not exactly orthodox; but it was quickly suppressed by the lecturer.

imagination," who came down to Norwich a few weeks since to enlighten us upon the doctrine of a "Second Coming," "The person of Antichrist," and the terrible judgments that are in store for us in about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years from the present time; amongst which are to be enumerated, "Louis Napoleon Bonaparte" invading this country as Antichrist, and cutting into mincemeat such as escape the crushing weight of hail-stones, of about three hundred weight each, which, according to his interpretation of the Book of Daniel, are to descend upon the remaining inhabitants of the earth somewhere about the year of our Lord, 1872, —a full, true, and particular account of which, however, is to be met with in his *book*, and which he took especial care to inform his audience, at the commencement of each service, was to be obtained at the doors, on leaving, at the very small cost of 2s. 3d.; and as it contains about twice as much matter as mine does, I look upon it as a monstrous cheap article—for it is *monstrous*, in more senses than one; for amongst its embellishments is that monstrously misunderstood monarch, "Louis Napoleon," transmogrified into a monster, to represent the seven-headed beast, one of which he has conveniently lopped off, symbolic of the letter N., so that Napoleon may then stand Apoleon, the Greek for Apollyon, to make it fit into his interpretation; but as my time now is limited, for the present, if you are "curious" on the point, you must beg, borrow, or buy it; and when I can talk a little better than I now do (which I hope to be able to do, by the aid of my friend Mr. Littleboy), I will tell you what I further think of that notable production. "In the mean time"—as they say in Scotland—let us see if we cannot draw some practical conclusions from what has already been said. Depend upon it, there is not all this *smoke* without there being some *fire*; and as "to be *fore-warned* is to be *fore-armed*," let us try if we cannot improve upon the extraordinary occurrences of the past and passing year—the Great Year 1866-7. There is an old Latin adage, "*Fas est et h<sup>ab</sup> hoste doceri*," which, as my English pronunciation is so exceedingly defective, I think I had better leave out altogether; but, bad or good, very few of you would understand it, I dare say, in the original; but it means, "It is allowable to derive instruction even from an enemy;" and, as there are other works making insidious

progress besides my own "mad rubbish," (like the underground railway, making a road for itself, and interfering with the regular traffic,) as these works (as the "uppers" think) may be supposed to interfere with the regular professors of prophecy, I think we had better defer a rigid inquiry into them to a future opportunity, which of course will materially depend upon the sinews of war; for, I can conscientiously tell you, the pursuit of my inquiries into these mysteries, hitherto, have neither replenished the exchequer, nor brought me much satisfaction in other respects than one, *my own conscience*; having, like the poor reclaimed sinner of old, when she "wasted" the box of ointment to anoint the Saviour's head, done what I could, at the same time feeling that I ought to have done a vast deal more. But I have been "hindered"—sadly hindered—by — well, Satan; although I think I shall prove, one day, human agency had a great deal to do in the matter.

Let us see, therefore, what practical conclusion we can come to this evening. I don't give you chapter and verse, as most of our religious teachers do, and thereby either lose or gain much time by referring to the passage; but, if I remember right, it is in the 3rd chap. of John's Gospel, where it is recorded a "master in Israel," one Nicodemus by name, went to hear what Christ had to say about the Scriptures, or rather the law and the prophets; and his reply rather astonished him, by the words "Except a man be born again, he cannot *see* the kingdom of God;" he couldn't even so much as *see* it, much more enter into it. He couldn't *see* it any more than you can see the spirits that fill this very Hall, witnessing what is going on here—

"It is a beautiful belief,  
That ever round our head  
Are hovering, on viewless wings,  
The spirits of the dead."

You may think that a strange assertion to make, but it is so, nevertheless and notwithstanding; and if we only knew this perfectly, how much greater heed would be given to that word of the Lord, "THOU GOD SEEST ME!" Ignorant and wicked men, intent on a deed of blood, intuitively acknowledge God, a God of some sort or other; but as they think he is a long way off, somewhere a few millions of miles beyond the stars, fancy the

deed of darkness is never witnessed. But if God in person is not there, he is there by his spirits, and if your spiritual eyes were opened here this very night, you would see this very Hall peopled with beings, numerically larger than the assembly I am addressing. But without adducing human evidence of this fact (for fact it is, strange as it may appear to you), by an appeal to the "*experiences*" of any body, let us see what the Bible says upon that point; 6th chap. 2nd book of Kings; let us look at that, and read *from the 8th verse to the 17th*: "Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp. And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down. And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice. Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not show me which of us is for the king of Israel? And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber. And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan. Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about. And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." God is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever; his armies are in the earth now, as they were at that time, but we cannot see them, any more than the prophet's servant could see them, till his spiritual eyes were opened. Elisha saw them, and that gave him confidence. I am not a prophet, therefore I don't see them here any more than *you* do, but my

faith is strong enough to believe it, and I have faith enough also to believe the day is not very far distant when our spiritual eyes will be opened, that we shall not only see the kingdom of heaven, but also "enter" into it, if by faith alone we see it now, and HIM who secured that kingdom for us. And that is the practical lesson we have to learn to night; not the *when*, and the *how*, he will come to be our judge; but whether we are prepared to receive him when he *does* come? whether it be "instant" or at Christmas next, or, as all the interpreters but one that I have met with, almost dogmatically insist that 1867 will see the commencement of the Millennium; *are we ready?* does Christ reign in our hearts? is our daily prayer to Him, "Thy kingdom come?" or is it mere sham and hypocrisy when we say, "Thy kingdom come," or "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly?" Are we not all wishing he may defer it, at all events for our time? For my own part, when I consider the vast amount of infidelity there is at this present time upon earth, I would rather ask for a reprieve, to give poor sinners a chance a little longer, for if the door of Mercy is once closed, and the sinner unregenerated, or in the words of our blessed Lord, not "born again," he cannot *see* the kingdom of God; it may be near him, but he cannot *see* it, and consequently will neither "enter in," nor participate in its enjoyments.

I am quite aware this involves a series of questions on doctrinal points, such as the "New Birth," "Election," "Predestination," and various other knotty considerations, which the Church of Christ are ever and anon bringing forward; as it appears to me, to keep up a continual warfare by ministers of the Gospel, much in the same way as some lawyers do, in a case that is as plain as a pike-staff; create an opposition, and thereout suck they great advantage. With these questions I have nothing to do, even if I were able to contend with the most learned theologian of the day: my message to you this night is, that CHRIST IS COMING, based upon the word of God, which you will find in Acts i. 9, 10, 11. That period is near at hand; so say all the prophets of the present day, and concurrent circumstances, patent to almost every body, warrant such a conclusion. How then is it with us? have we decided upon which side we will be? for it is like an election; who do you vote for? Don't turn away from

the entreaty that is made to you in very simple language, based upon an equally reliable Scripture as that which I have just quoted. Take the case of the Philippian jailer, Acts xvi. 31 : his cry was, "What must I do to be saved?" And what was the reply? Paul and Silas did not enter into these questions that have perplexed and dismayed suffering humanity these hundreds of years; their reply was simple, short, and decisive: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," and they didn't stop there, for they added, "*and thy house*;" and that is what I have to say to you: Believe and thou shalt be saved: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believed on him should not perish, but should have eternal life." *Whosoever*! That word has made many a Christian soldier, who before gave himself up as lost, because he felt he did not belong to the elect. A lady of my acquaintance, many years ago now, always met my arguments with the remark, "Oh! I'm not one of the elect; I'm too bad for heaven; too good for hell; so where I shall go I cannot tell;" and so she followed the bent of her inclinations; and being a fine dashing young lady, just the creature for routs, assemblies, fancy balls, and the like, had her "fling," as she called it; but one day hearing a sermon from that text, she became an altered creature, and the last time I met her, she said to me, "That word '*whosoever*' made me a Christian." And she is that now in the fullest sense of the word, and living to God's praise and glory; and *waiting* as all Christians must be, "Waiting for the kingdom;" which is the true position of the Church. May such be the effect on you my friends, from the words I have spoken, is my earnest heartfelt prayer.

But, my friends, I should ill perform my office, if I did not tell you I conscientiously believe, that day and hour, of which *knoweth* no man, I firmly believe to be near at hand; and if we have the pleasure to meet here again, I will tell you why *I* think so. If I am debarred that pleasure, you may ascertain it from those works my worthy friend so flippantly disposed of, and which I do not, like the gentleman of Napoleonic notoriety, ask you to buy at the door as you go out; but you may meet with

them at the Public Free Library, where I have deposited several copies for the exclusive use of the working classes, and if more are required, I shall be happy to supply them, such as are in print. Mr. Harper informs me they have been read very freely, are never in fact at home, and would be very glad if any lady or gentleman tired of reading the "Twenty Years of a Traveller's Life," would present a copy to the Institution, that which they have having been read to rags, and also the "Midsummer Mornings' Dream."

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The Rev. Chairman then addressed the meeting, proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer, which was carried with applause, and concluded with announcing his intention to be present on the succeeding occasions at his own expense, although living at a distance of fifty miles.

The doxology was then sung, and the meeting dispersed.

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## LECTURE II.

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"FAS EST ET HAB HOSTE DOCERI."

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MR. CHAIRMAN, CHRISTIAN FRIENDS, AND FELLOW CITIZENS :—  
AT our first and last meeting, we took into consideration, mainly, the words that stood prominent on the hand-bills convening it, viz. "The Instant Coming of our Lord and Saviour," and who were the parties instituting that startling and sensational announcement, viz. the "Irvingites," as they are popularly styled in London, worshipping in Gordon Square, and other places, with nearly all the outward forms and ceremonies of the Romish Church, but using the same words as our Book of Common Prayer in the Church of England contains, though not exactly in the same order that we do; but the prayers and thanksgivings, psalms, and songs of praise are the same; what their motive is for thus using such a startling announcement I do not pretend to say, but I told my tale for the Church of England to take what steps they might think necessary under the circumstances. For myself, I feel so much interest in the question, for reasons I shall endeavour to show you this evening, that, let the cry come from whatever quarter it may, I hail it with a secret feeling of satisfaction. I am *not* under the "great delusion" some of my very charitable neighbours think I am. Men with large balances in their bankers' hands, "at ease in their possessions, and counting on long years of pleasure here, are quite unfurnished for the world to come;" and to whom an "instant coming," in a majority of instances, would be exceedingly unpalatable.

We also took into consideration the great peculiarities of

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the present year of our Lord, called by some of the prophets of the present day, "The Great Year, 1866," and what bearing they might have on "the signs of the times" that are to characterise "the last days of this dispensation," as recorded in both Old and New Testaments,—with a practical application of the whole, as regarded ourselves;—whether or not we are in a position to receive our Redeemer when He does come; whether it be "instant," or future. I state this for the information of such as are present now who were absent on the former occasion; but there was one circumstance I omitted to mention in the concurrent testimonies of the *time* of the end by Dr. Cumming; the author of the "Coming Struggle;" the author of the pamphlet entitled "The Great Year 1866;" "Anomia," and "The Last Vials;" the most prominent authorities I could collect, although there are many others, all of them *clergymen*; not forgetting our Canadian friend, the Rev. M. Baxter, whose "tall talk" rather frightened some of our citizens, I think, but who gives us a little longer breathing-time than the first-named gentlemen do, as they all concur in 1866-7; but one I omitted, which I somewhat regret, as, considered all together, they are, I think, more calculated to make us *think* that there really must be something of a momentous character impending, when all this upheaving of society is taken into serious application. I do not now remember where I saw the passage, but I certainly did see it somewhere, for I could never have thought of such a thing, and it was never told me, or I could give you the author, and it is this: "The Jews are looking for their Messiah in 1866-7. Amongst their traditions is one that He will come in great glory at the end of their 50th Jubilee, which terminates with 1866-7. Every fifty years the Jews hold their Jubilee in the faith that their Messiah will come in glory at that time, that is, at the expiration of 2,500 years; and that period is arrived at this very year, 1866-7." I should have mentioned this on the former occasion, but, trusting too much to memory, I forgot it, otherwise I intended to have offered it to your notice immediately after I had read that (as I consider it) important letter of the author of "The Coming Struggle," where he states the fall of the Papacy will usher in the Second Coming of Christ; the one and the other, as he states, occurring at the same time;

but, as I hope to put these lectures into print, in a cheap form, by and by, it is not a matter of so much importance. I state the fact now, lest I should forget it altogether, in the effort I shall make to show you the reasons why *I* think we are very near "the end of this dispensation." To do this effectually, I fear I shall have to try your patience by referring to what many of you, perhaps, are already acquainted with. Be that as it may, I must crave your indulgence and forbearance, because I am so thoroughly convinced, in my own mind, that not only ministers of the Church of England, but also worshippers in that Church, look with very suspicious eyes on anything that partakes of the "marvellous." Very many, however, think the contrary, and read with avidity any kind of writing that shares in that characteristic. At the same time, many who have looked with more charitable feelings on these writings, sum up their criticism with that declaration of the Apostle Paul, "We walk by faith, and not by sight."

Nothing can be more true than that the apostle did so write, and, doubtless, when he did so was under the influence of the Holy Spirit; but, sir, what was it that created that faith in him? Is it to be inferred that he had entirely forgotten and lost sight of that memorable journey he went upon to Damascus? You do not require me to go into the narrative; it is known, not only to you, but to every parish-taught child in the kingdom; yet, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, at the 11th chapter, he appears, to my mind, to have totally thrown down the ladder which had raised him to the highest pinnacle of earthly happiness the Christian can enjoy in this world,—secret communion with God, and with his Saviour,—*obtained by the agency of SIGHT and SOUND*. He told that marvellous story *three times*, but all he obtained for the relation was, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; too much learning hath made thee mad."

My own experiences of "sight and sound" I have never yet told *viva voce*, I have only written them, which I have done four times now; and by some I have obtained the same unenviable and questionable notoriety, and, actually, on one occasion, to clear me from the consequences of having expressed my feelings rather too strongly, pleaded, without asking my consent, something very like aberrated intellect,—a very convenient sort of

defence, if it has no other virtue ; however, it neither disturbed me nor my intellect either, for

“ The man defeated 'gainst his will,  
Maintains the same opinion still.”

You know the rest.

“ You must be mad,” said one of my oldest and best friends ; “ all such revelations as those you have written upon, ceased when Christ ascended into heaven, and all that has been written on such occurrences are only evidences of a fever oppressed brain.”

“ In that case,” said I, “ all that Paul has written concerning himself you must ignore.”

“ Not at all,” he said ; “ Paul was an exception, and all that either you or the Roman Catholic Church puts forth, on that subject, is spurious, and not to be depended on.”

Such reasoning as this, I admit, has been the exception ; for, generally speaking, these evidences and “ experiences,” to which I shall have to allude more particularly in the consideration of the question of “ Spiritualism, whence and what is it ? ” have been tacitly received by upwards of a thousand personal friends I had, in the large body of commercial travellers, amongst whom I passed the first thirty years of my commercial life, and amongst whom, God willing, I purpose again to make my appearance.

Before, however, I enter more fully upon this portion of this lecture, I wish to perform the promise I made on the last occasion of my addressing you, viz. to give you *my* reasons for thinking the personal advent of our Lord is near at hand ; to do which I shall have to bring into comparison two works, one my own, which my ecclesiastical friend designated as “ mad rubbish,” and another the production of a gentleman considered to be by some writers a man of “ dislocated imagination,” and this is the work,—its title, “ Napoleon, the Destined Monarch of the World,”—by the Rev. M. Baxter, who I think hails from Canada. The book was brought to my notice in a very peculiar manner ; in fact, but for my visit to London to find employment of some kind or other, I should, in all probability, never have either seen or heard of it, and, in all probability, I should not have written mine, nor should I have been here, most likely, to speak

to you about it ; but, in casting about for materials to write a book of some sort,—for I found I could do nothing else, my age and infirmities prevailing against me in the endeavour to find more substantial employment,—this book of Mr. Baxter's was put into my hands by a devout Christian lady friend of mine, to have my opinion about it, as she said it had startled her very much ; and she began to think all he had written concerning Napoleon III. was about to take place, and much more, which I cannot now enter into. But, on opening its pages, the very first thing that attracted my attention was the chronological table it contains, at page 358, of the 6,000 years this world of ours, by some interpreters of Scripture, is destined to last. He dates the age of the world, when Christ appeared in the manger at Bethlehem, to be 4128, and then adds, for the Christian era, 1872, making exactly 6000.

It immediately occurred to me that, in the year 1854, I had written, under an influence I could not repress,—for I assure you, my friends, I sometimes write what I cannot see, and *do not* see, until it is in print ; but there it is, in a work I published in 1854, for the purpose of making more intelligible that which I had written in 1853 ; and this is the somewhat remarkable passage in that “Key,” at page 178:—“and as I have elsewhere written, when the light of truth had not broken in upon my understanding:—‘*Let the multitude live, though it should be attended with individual sacrifice,*’ so now do I say, ‘*Let not the year 1872 find you, reader, unable to say, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.”*’

And you will ask me what induced me to write so, and what relation 1872 can have to such a great matter as the “Millennium,” or “The Second Advent.” My answer is this : All the time I was under this peculiar visitation, which some have designated “delusion,” and “insanity,” there were certain signs given me, which enabled me to foretell events that have now become matters of history, accompanied by a “voice” I could distinctly hear, without seeing any one, by which I arrived at this conclusion respecting 1872 ; indefinite, I admit, at the time I wrote it ; but if the Rev. M. Baxter is right in his chronological table, it makes that passage in my book one of a far more startling character than I had been led to look upon it,

during the period of my occupation on "Charing Cross;" for I had begun to think as others thought *for* me, and *of* me,—that these were matters upon which I had allowed my mind to dwell too long, and that in commercial transactions my occupation was more fitted to my acquirements and position; and, had my poor friend lived, I should doubtless have been there now, but "the Lord took him," and I was obliged to seek other employment; but, every attempt I have made in that direction having failed, it seems to me this is the course I must, for a time at least, adopt, or remain idle. At all events, such was the impression the chronological table of Mr. Baxter made upon me, that I at once addressed myself to the task, began and finished the work we have now to examine and, if possible, ascertain what it is, *Spiritualism*, or any other "ISM,"—and, above all,—from *WHENCE* is its origin, from heaven or from hell? If the former, then are its revelations of that character we ought to be in some measure guided by; if the latter, the sooner they are burnt and put to oblivion, the better.

Since, however, comparing this passage of mine relative to the year 1872, I have, with the aid of a gentleman acquainted with the Hebrew language, looked into one of the Jewish Rabbi's books, to see what he has to say upon the matter, and I think it only fair to assume that they (i. e. the Jews, to whom were committed the care of the "sacred oracles") are a more reliable authority than any other; and I find, according to their chronology, the present age of the world is 5627. Consequently, to complete the 6000 years, there are 373 years still for the world to go on, and, therefore, the statement I just now made, that their 50th Jubilee would end this year 1866, cannot be implicitly relied on, as, according to their computation of the age of the world from Adam, instead of fifty Jubilees, it would take exactly 120 Jubilees, 50 times 120 being exactly 6000 years. So far, then, neither Mr. Baxter's computation (if it be his), nor my own interpretation of the "signs" I witnessed, will bear the test of an examination by Hebrew authority. Nor will Mr. Baxter's application of the name of Louis Napoleon Buonaparte synchronise, or harmonise, with the number of the Beast 666.—See Rev. xiii. 18: "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast, for it

## THE SIX THOUSAND YEARS

*Traced in the Bible from Adam to the Millennium in 1872-3.*

Anno Mundi.	Before Christ.		
0	4128	(1) The Creation of Man to the close of the Deluge. (Gen. v. and viii. 13, 14.) ... ..	1656
1656	2472	(2) The close of the Deluge to the birth of Terah. (Gen. xi. 10 to 24.)... ..	222
1878	2250	(3) Terah's birth to his son Abraham's removal to Canaan. (Acts vii. 6; Gen. xi. 32, xii. 1-5.) ... ..	205
2083	2045	(4) Abraham's removal to the date of the Exodus. (Ex. xii. 40; Gal. iii. 8, 17.)... ..	430
2513	1615	(5) The Exodus to the Distribution of the Land. (1 yr. Num. x. 11 to xiii. 25, and 45 yrs. Josh. xiv.) ... ..	46
2559	1569	(6) The Dividing of the Land to the end of Samuel's Judgeship. (Acts xiii. 20.) ... ..	450
3009	1119	(7) Reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon (40 yrs. each). (Acts xiii. 21; 2 Sam v. 4; 1 Kings xi. 42.) ... ..	120
3129	999	(8) End of Solomon's to the end of Jehoiachin's Reign. (1 Kings xi. 43, to 2 Kings xxv.) ... [Reckoning 11 years' interregnum from Amaziah to Azariah. 2 Kings xiv. 2, 23, xv. 1.]	393
3522	606	(9) The 70 years' captivity from Jehoiachin's capture until Cyrus' 1st year. (2 Kings xxiv. 8 to 16; Ez. 1; Jer. xxv. 12.) ... ..	70
3592	536	(10) Cyrus' 1st year to the midst of Artaxerxes Longimanus' 7th year (by the common chronology) ... ..	79
		[Cyrus' 7 years, Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes (Ez. iv. 6, 7) 8 years, Darius (Ez. vi. 1) 36 1-2 years, Xerxes 21 years, Artaxerxes Longimanus' 6 1-2 years.]	
3671	457	(11) The midst of Artaxerxes Longimanus' 7th year to the birth of Christ. (Dan. ix. 24-26; Ez. vii.) ... ..	457
		[Daniel's 70 weeks are generally held to begin about A.D. 457, in Artaxerxes' 7th year.]	
4128	0	Total, from the creation of Adam to the birth of Christ ... ..	4128
		Add (for the period of the Christian dispensation)... ..	1872
		Total, from the creation of Adam to the Millennium	6000

*From the Rev. M. Baxter's work, "Louis Napoleon the destined Monarch of the World."*

is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred three score and six ; ” for to make it tally with the numerical value of the letters in the original Hebrew, the O and the E, wherever they occur, have to be left out,—O and E, in Hebrew, being of no numerical value,—he, therefore, has to render the spelling as follows :—

Sound.		Name.		Numerical Value.
L	.	Lamed	.	30
U	.	Vau	.	6
I	.	Yod	.	10
S	.	Samech	.	60
N	.	Nun	.	50
A	.	Aleph	.	1
P	.	Pe	.	80
L	.	Lamed	.	30
N	.	Nun	.	50
B	.	Beth	.	2
V	.	Vau	.	6
N	.	Nun	.	50
A	.	Aleph	.	1
P	.	Pe	.	80
A	.	Aleph	.	1
R	.	Resch	.	200
T	.	Teth	.	9

Thus you have 666

Besides which, Napoleon's name is Charles Louis Napoleon Buonaparte ; and, more than all this, he is not Antichrist, nor is the Pope, for, as it is written in 1 John ii. 22, “ He is Antichrist who denieth the Father and the Son.”

And again, Dr. Cumming's interpretation of the word “ *Latēinos* ” or “ *Ramiith*,” to mean the “ Latin man,” and “ Rome,” and *per se* “ the Pope,” requires the same manipulation to make it fit in with the Pope's identity. Take the word *Ramiith*, as it must be spelt to make up the number, instead of *Rœmiith*, as it is rendered in the work I have looked into, meaning *Rome* :

Sound.		Name,		Numerical Value.
R	.	Resch	.	200
A	.	Aleph	.	1
M	.	Mem	.	40
I	.	Yod	.	10
I	.	”	.	10
T	.	Tau	.	400
H	.	He	.	5

Thus you have 666

Dr. Cumming makes the word Lateinos in Greek 666, and somebody else of equally reliable authority, makes another word produce the same total of figures. And so it is, that, between these theological battledores, we inquiring shuttlecocks are kept knocked from one to the other, till we begin to question the authenticity and authority of the Scriptures altogether—unless by God's grace enlightened to know all that we require really to know, "Jesus Christ and Him crucified."—five words the apostle Paul, in the early part of his career, declared he would preach, and determined to know nothing else. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that *whosoever* believed on him should not *perish* but have eternal life." That word "*perish*" has given birth to a most lively controversy, by different expounders of the word of God; and the doctrines of "everlasting punishment," and "entire extinction," which the word "*perish*" is brought forward to substantiate, are made subjects for argumentative theology, not only in pamphlets, but the Christian world is set together by the ears from many a pulpit, in expounding these exceedingly controversial questions: to no beneficial purpose I think, as has been evidenced not very long ago in the parish church I am privileged to worship in. I am not here however to discuss those questions, or give my opinion upon them one way or the other. Our Heavenly Father has given us in his word ample instructions, if we choose to be guided by them, by which we may escape the one, and in the promise of eternal life on the other hand, set our fears at rest regarding the abstruse question of "entire extinction." For although our God is a "God of love," yet he is also a "consuming fire," "consuming" in that sense being construed by these debaters into utter and entire extinction, as preferable to eternal punishment and misery; a very questionable doctrine to my mind to preach to an unpardoned sinner determined on this world and no other; for what would be his conclusion of the matter but, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," i.e. we are *consumed*: a doctrine the late R. Owen endeavoured to instil into my mind when a fellow passenger with me from New York in America to England in 1848, in his declaration to me, "There is no God." But there is a God, "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, *and that will by no means clear the guilty*; visiting the

iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children unto the third and the fourth generation." Jealous, too, jealous of his word which he has declared "shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it;" and anything that is put forth to supplant or ignore that word, he will most assuredly bring to judgment; hence it is I have felt the great peculiarity of my own position, how to set forth in a proper manner that which I consider to be the evidence of Almighty power and wisdom, in the narrative of (to me) a most marvellous visitation. I was a long time deciding how to act, but on searching the Scriptures, which I did immediately on my restoration to my own home, by reading the whole book from Genesis to Revelation *twice*, my mind was relieved by the passage I met with in Joel xi. 28, "And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your *daughters* shall prophesy, your old men shall dream *dreams*, your young men shall see VISIONS." I was then a young man, not much over forty years, and after much correspondence with my unknown friend the author of "The Coming Struggle," to whom I related as much of the circumstances as I could in letters, acted upon his advice, which he very laconically conveyed to me in one line; "My advice to you is contained in the last two words of the 15th verse of the 14th chapter of Exodus." Those two words are, as you will find, "GO FORWARD;" and I have done so, at all hazards, made large sacrifices in both time and labour; my pen incessantly employed in writing to such ministers of the Gospel as I thought were most likely to be influenced by my entreaties, to make the subject of "The Second Coming of Christ" less formal, by preaching the doctrine at other times, than is set apart for its consideration by the forms of our Church; and also by "foisting on the public" that which by some has been so uncharitably condemned, and by some called SPIRITUALISM, but which I entirely deny, because that which is called Spiritualism, is *seeking* after Spirits, and communication with the unseen world, through the agency of table turning, rapping, and I know not what other conjurations they go through to "bring up spirits from the vasty deep." I have never lent myself to any such exhibitions; and the only Spirit I seek to be guided by, is

in the prayer I daily offer, "Lord, take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

Yet for all this, and notwithstanding, they assert—I have been visited by a Spirit, and that Spirit or "Voice" is not to be relied on. Here is one letter from the gentleman who delivered the Lecture in St. Martin's Hall, under the startling announcement of "The Instant Coming of Christ;" and either an "Elder," or an "Angel," or an "Apostle" of that Church, for so they designate themselves, which by this announcement is gathering thousands to hear them, and whose form of worship, as I told you before on the last occasion of my addressing you, out-Romes Rome itself in its ceremonial gewgaws. The letter is too long to read; on the whole it is complimentary, but he winds up a long dissertation by saying, "The Lord is not 'a voice,' and therefore 'the voice' you have been under guidance and tuition is but another *phase* of Spiritualism, and is *Satanic*." (Satanic! of course it must be in his estimation, because it was not communicated through *his* Church, I suppose. But is it likely that arch enemy of souls, that mind of fathomless guile and subtlety, would take all that trouble to instruct me in the way to heaven, when he had me fast enough in his bonds, that were leading me the downward path to hell? I should give Satan credit for a far wiser course of proceeding; especially, if he knew anything at all, he knew I should "make known the secrets of the prison house." He would have been far more likely to have retained his hold, had he furnished me with ample means to live a life of luxury and independence, so that I might have fully enjoyed all the pleasures of this life, in the gay vortex of dissipation, and the gratification of unholy desires.) He sent me a printed paper, styled "an address" setting forth some of the peculiarities of *The Church* of which he is a member, which concludes thus:—"And we do further and finally testify, that God has restored these ordinances (viz. Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Pastors, as originally given and now restored), and instituted in London, and England, and elsewhere, Congregations where the worship is ordered of God by Apostles, where the Holy Ghost speaketh by Prophets, and forth from which proceed the feet of his Evangelists, who now call on all who have "ears," to hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." Somewhat pretentious

and dictatorial I think ; but when I asked the gentlemen in my reply, to explain to me that passage in the 19th chapter, 1st Book of Kings, 11th verse, when the Lord spake to Elijah the prophet, when "The strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire *a still small voice*." For that was the nature of the "voice" which communicated with me, so "still" that I had to lay as though I were dead to hear it; the least rustle of the straw that was in my bed drowning it. To that letter I received no reply, for he could not say the Lord was not *a voice*, if he believed that word of God.

Here is another letter from one of the most persevering men that I know of as a Clergyman, for preaching the doctrine of the Millennium, denouncing "*The Voice*," because, he says, it did not confess that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh, and that I ought to have asked that question myself, as we are enjoined by the apostle to "Try the spirits whether they be of God," "and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God," *ergo*, I was "to pay no heed to it." I replied to that letter, by stating that as at the time I was as ignorant of that portion of Scripture as a four months baby, it was impossible for me to put the question; but in so far as that matter was concerned, "The Voice" had satisfied my mind upon that point most conclusively, without my asking. So much so, that, "The Athanasian Creed," which before was to me as so much Greek, I not only accepted, but that I *understood it* completely. And I added, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." He did not treat me as my learned friend the "Irvingite" did, but called upon me, and kindly gave me a sovereign towards my expenses. So that you see, my friends, instead of shaking my belief in the reality of this "visitation," and its *bona fide* nature, from which information is to be gained, every controversy I have entered into only strengthens it.

I do not name this for the purpose of "blowing my own trumpet," or to induce you to become *purchasers* of my works, as Mr. Baxter did when he was here; but to induce you to read them; for which purpose I have furnished the Free Library with

several copies for the exclusive use of the working classes. At the same time, I shall be very thankful to any lady or gentleman taking a copy, as it will enable me the more easily to carry on the course of lectures to their completion. Before, however, I take this book of mine into consideration, and lest you should think I am desirous of "setting up a new religion," as a gentleman of this city told me the other day, and refused me the use of his room in consequence, I will just read to you a few verses from the word of God, to show you it is nothing new I am about to bring before you; but on the contrary, as old as the hills, and merely a *revival* of that which has been slumbering for years. Turn to 1 Cor. xii., and let us read from the first to the eleventh verses: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

So that you see "the discerning of spirits" is no *new doctrine*, although by some it is in these days of super-enlightened wisdom, denominated *indiscriminately* "witchcraft" and "demonology," and many other things that do not belong to the actual "*discerning of spirits*," and although Paul says, in the 7th verse, "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal," he does not mean that men are to make money thereby, as many are now doing, who possess that gift, but to make it "profitable for doctrine, and to destroy the works of darkness," amplified by

many in their materialistic views and Sadduceeism, which say there is no spirit, and that it is ALL "humbug" that treats of it. That there is a great deal that is spurious and questionable, I am quite ready to admit; and as by some I have been identified with it, in one sense I am here to clear myself of it, and at the same time impart information to you on the principle of our Latin quotation at the head of the bills, in a Latin phrase, announcing this meeting; viz. "it is allowable to derive instruction even from an enemy," if so be it turns out that I am attempting to set up a "new religion," as my friend twitted me with. I will now with your permission read from this work of mine, in doing which I hope you will not charge me with *egoism*; inasmuch as authors before me are doing the same thing with their own productions, to a far greater profit than I shall ever make of mine or intend to attempt—Charles Dickens, for instance, and of late Mr. Artemus Ward. But as I feel somewhat desirous of varying the character of these meetings, and also take into consideration your own feelings in keeping your attention so long fixed upon these somewhat exciting topics, I shall be brief, to allow my revd. friend, your chairman, an opportunity of speaking; for there is a solemnity about them, notwithstanding I may appear to treat them with less of that compound of thought than I ought; but the fact is, I do not look upon Christianity as *asceticism*, nor do I wear or attempt to put on that lugubrious look many of our expounders of these mysteries do,—my teaching has been of that nature, that I realise the truth of those words I quoted to one of those Spiritualists I met in London at one of their soirées. "The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and JOY in the *Holy Ghost*;" and I can truly say, if I have not all I should like in meat and drink (teetotalism especially avoided), and fall short of that "righteousness" which leads to the possession of the latter, I have both "peace and joy," and never more so than when I am singing, not such songs as I used to be famous for, "We won't go home till the morning," or "When other lips and other hearts," and the like, which are all very well in their way, but making melody in my heart with such glorious anthems as "My soul doth magnify the Lord," "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty," and, more than any other, that beautiful song of Jubilee, in which, ere long, angels

and archangels, and all the glorious company of heaven shall join, " Ride on ! Ride on in Majesty," which if you please we will now sing.

We will now if you please read from the work I last published, " The Cross," commencing at page 96 to 101 ;—which having read, the Rev. Chairman addressed the attentive audience in his own peculiar style, thoroughly evangelical, and after an extemporaneous delivery of some length, concluded with singing No. 64 from the " Bickersteth " collection—" God save the Queen"—which rather astonished a great number of those assembled, being chiefly of the working classes, and many to whom Church services were anything but familiar. The meeting concluded with prayer and dismissal blessing ; a vote of thanks being, as on the former occasion, voted to the Lecturer and the Chairman.

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## LECTURE III.

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"AUT VOX DEI, AUT VOX, ET PRÆTEREA NIHIL."

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MR. CHAIRMAN AND CHRISTIAN FRIENDS :—

OUR inquiry to night will be directed to consider the question of Spiritualism—from whence and what it is? and also, whether or not it has any relation to the "Coming Millennium," so anxiously looked for by many of Christ's faithful people: and as we proceed, it will be well for us to bear in mind what St. Paul wrote to the *Hebrews* in his Epistle, at the xiii. chapter and 2nd verse, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." also those lines of the poet Milton, speaking of ministering spirits, he says—

"Thousands at His bidding speed  
And post o'er *land* and *ocean* without rest,"

Paul again, in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, at the 12th verse of the sixth chapter, says "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." And our inquiry will be directed to consider whether it is with any of these, the "Spiritualism" of the present day is connected; for it is useless to do otherwise than admit it as a "fact," and a great fact, too, when its advocates number themselves not by thousands only, but absolutely millions; as Mr. Howitt, in his celebrated letter he wrote to Mr. Barkas, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, which by assent he allowed me to reprint in my work "The Cross," boldly asserts by *naïvely* asking, "Do your negatives think we are all fools and blind? that there are

now some four or five millions of fools in the world, who don't know a hawk from a handsaw? that we are demented, because we won't gratify their stolidity by saying, we don't see things when we do?" The letter is too long to read, but grant him his fact.

At the conclusion of our last Lecture, I gave you the description of a scene I witnessed in London when I was surrounded by beings, who declared themselves to be Angels, and whom I had heard speak in language I never before heard from lips of mortal men. It was impossible for them to have passed me in their exit from the room without my both seeing and feeling them: they had mysteriously vanished, and I found myself suddenly alone, whereas the room before was full, their number being twelve. I have had all along considerable doubts on my mind as to whether I should have made this scene public, as I had been instructed by them "not to enter that house again." Notwithstanding, on the following morning I returned, because I could not find a party they had instructed me to call upon, and I consequently went to obtain further information; (but since that period, the publication of equally mysterious circumstances by men of public standing and eminence, has made me more reconciled to it.) I saw two of them differently habited to the appearance they presented on the former evening, one of them said, "See, he does not know us again." I answered, "You are mistaken, sirs, I recognise you both, although you are differently clothed;" and having explained my reason for appearing there again, they said "We will show you." I followed them into the street, but whilst I looked upon them, they vanished from my sight, and I was left to my own deliberations. You may naturally conclude I felt in some bewilderment how to act; but feeling a strange desire to know more of this mystery, I went towards the house of a party I had visited with a gentleman, who had a few days previously attached himself to me, a perfect stranger, and with whom I had passed nearly the whole of the previous Friday evening and following Saturday; but whom I had unceremoniously parted from, as I could not understand why he had selected me, a perfect stranger, to be his companion, and especially when I found him to be without money. As I was about to descend the steps by the Duke of York column leading into the Park,

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one of those mysterious beings who had grasped my hand so tightly the previous evening, suddenly appeared at my side, habited for a journey, and intimating thereby I was to return to my home in Norwich, as suddenly vanished from my sight. I thereupon addressed myself to the completion of the business I had in hand, and returned to my home by rail the same evening, with my mind as clear for the relation of these strange, and as it seemed to me unnatural occurrences, as it is at this very moment, and made my wife acquainted with the whole of the circumstances, agreeably with the directions they had given me, "Tell your wife every thing you have witnessed and heard;" and I did so, which led her to the conclusion my mind was disordered, being influenced by a party resident in this city,—who I do not hesitate to say, caused her to act as she did, that he might invalidate my testimony, not only on this subject, but concerning his treatment of me and ignoring his contract with me afterwards, by which he not only defrauded me of a large sum of money, but it gave him the advantage of declaring me a lunatic, and a man of unsound mind; inasmuch as he had the opportunity of saying in an affidavit he afterwards made, that I was the inmate of an asylum, and the moneys he had paid me in part of that contract, amounting to upwards of £500, he had given me out of CHARITY! But this I pass over, as I hope yet to make it the subject of inquiry in the Court of Equity—for if ever a man committed *wilful* and *corrupt perjury*, that man most assuredly has done it; and if this declaration comes to his ears, and he thinks I allude to him, if the cap fits him, let him wear it, *qui capit ille facit*.

I will not weary you with the detail of all that occurred to me the week previously to this incarceration, as it is set forth most minutely in the works I have published, but *this* I will say, the treatment I was subjected to was heartless, brutal, and indefensible. Conscious that my faculties were not in the least impaired, I felt most acutely my position, when I found myself the companion of

"The moping idiot and the madman gay,"

at the same time equally conscious of the presence of an unseen power, that would make that which was wholly unintelligible to me, clear to my understanding; for I had not forgotten the

history of Daniel in the den of lions, and although I had not then been enlightened on *the DOCTRINE so essential to know*, I prayed God he would defend me from any attacks these poor creatures might in their mad antics make upon me, and he heard and answered me, for I can safely say, I never in my life felt more calm and collected, than I did throughout nearly the *whole* of that eventful period, or otherwise I could never have placed on record such a "revelation" as I have done (be it divine or otherwise), and from which I proceed now to make extracts, for the purpose of ascertaining whether any satisfactory conclusion may be obtained from it, on a doctrine, those who have set themselves as it were apart from the world, and made their *study*, have made it to "doubtful disputations," viz. as to whether Christ's reign upon earth is to be a *spiritual* or a *personal* reign, to be heralded in by occurrences of an equally extraordinary character as this "visitation" and the Spiritualism of the present day. We have, in the two previous Lectures, examined the interpretations of Scripture by divines of long standing, and acknowledged ability, and find them disagreeing on the most essential points for us to know; and it is therefore now a point for inquiry, whether our merciful Father has not caused his "Spirit to be poured out upon all flesh," so that "your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men see visions," that will at once set at rest this greatly disputed point—the personal advent of our blessed Lord and Saviour.

That such things are common in this age of the world, I could adduce many remarkable testimonies—that they have been common in all ages of the world, there is, in a work published by "Longmans," and written by one of the most powerful writers of the day (Mr. Wm. Howitt), ample evidence. Mr. Howitt and his highly accomplished wife have been before the public, as authors of great celebrity, for many years. I have had much correspondence with him on the subject of "Spiritualism," in the earlier part of which he was a *Unitarian*, as also was the late Rev. Jas. Smith, the then editor of the "Family Herald;" and my reason for putting myself in correspondence with these celebrities was for the purpose of bringing my own "experiences" before them, and, although not a Spiritualist, in their acceptance of the term, to convince them of the divinity of our Saviour.

How far I succeeded on that point with the editor of the "Family Herald" I do not know, but I certainly succeeded in convincing him of the reality of spirit communication, as the following letter I received from him, after a volume of writing, will testify. (See page 94, "The Cross.")

This gentleman, and author of "The Divine Drama of Civilisation" (a very abstruse work), reviewed my work, "Midsummer Mornings' Dream, in the "Herald" very flippantly—tantamount to a disbelief in the statements I had made, and to bring it into ridicule; but, in his private correspondence with me, said, "I have never entertained for one moment a doubt of the *reality* of your visitation;" and afterwards apologised for his slighting remarks, by stating, "the proprietors did not think it a sufficiently profitable subject for their columns." *How* he afterwards satisfied his doubt and scruples I did not learn, but it is evident, from the letter I have just read you, that he had obtained indubitable proof that spirits walk this earth, and mix themselves up with the affairs of this world. He would have furnished me with further information on the point, but illness laid him low, from which he never recovered; and his place as editor is now occupied by another.

With respect to Mr. Howitt, he is an author of long standing, and, many years ago, obtained the ill will of the clergy by a work he wrote, entitled "Priestcraft in all Ages," which brought the High Church party about his ears like a nest of hornets. At that time he was one of the "Society of Friends;" but whatever "ism" he belongs to, his writings are very popular, and his opinions are not to be *pooh-poohed*, because he avows himself a Spiritualist. One thing is certain—"Spiritualism" has brought him out from *Unitarianism*, and that, in itself, speaks volumes in favour of that still, to me, *most questionable form of worship*. I look upon it, however, as a *means* to an *end*; and in that aspect I wish to consider the question with you. But let us hear what he says for himself; and you must bear in mind that these letters of his are written off-hand, with no view to publication; nor had he when he wrote them, nor has he now, the slightest knowledge of the use I am making, and intend to make, of them. Hence you may take them as the sincere expressions of the writer.

"Highgate, September 20, 1866.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of 'The Cross,' which you have had the courtesy to send me, and trust it will answer your expectations in the publication. I consider the republication of your spiritual experiences as the most valuable part of the volume. They will always remain as a proof of the reality of spiritual visitation, and throw great light on the true nature of insanity.

"As to your remarks on Spiritualism in general, and on Miss Hardinge, as well as on the Davenport Brothers, they are based on insufficient knowledge, and therefore are, in my opinion, of no value whatever. The Davenports never *were* exposed by the 'Tom-fool Knot,' which has been tried on them scores of times in America, and which I have seen tried on them repeatedly here, under the strictest circumstances, without any effect. They are now, and have been for some months, displaying their remarkable phenomena in Belgium, before the most scientific and intelligent people, who, acting like men of common sense and common candour, declare the phenomena perfectly inexplicable on any physical principle. The press there has universally given the same opinion, and have treated the subject as sensible people should treat anything submitted to their examination. As to all explanations of prophecy, neither Cumming, Baxter, nor Starr can explain them beforehand; they are only seen in their true light *after* their fulfilment.—Yours faithfully,

"F. STARR, Esq."

"WILLIAM HOWITT.

"Highgate, September 24, 1866.

"MY DEAR SIR,—What I said to you in my last you confirm in the note just received. You speak of Spiritualism without sufficient information. Spiritualists fully admit the doctrine of the Trinity, and have written and spoken often, and in the amplest manner, of it, and of their views of it. That you should not have heard them in the attendance at two *soirées* is not wonderful; but does it not occur to you, that it is rather rash to say what Spiritualists do or do not believe, have or have not explained, on such infinitesimally small knowledge? If you read Harris's Lectures, delivered in London, a few years ago, or the 'Spiritual Magazine,' now in six volumes, you would then see what they really do believe. I am glad that the prophetic fortune-tellers have fixed a date for the great Spiritual revolution, which they predict, as that will soon bring them to the scratch. I do not believe that any *visible* New Jerusalem will come down, or that any holy hocus-pocus by which all the world will be 'changed in the twinkling of an eye' will occur; but I do believe that every prediction of Christ will be verified spiritually, in its own time. I hope you will get a new commercial engagement, and not expect any change in six months that will supersede the necessity of living on in a money-making world. God's judgments are clearly in the earth—cattle murrain, cholera, wars, destruction of the harvest, and in six months we shall be suffering from bad and very dear bread. I am quite sure you would feel much happier once more on the road, with a good income, and it would give me very great pleasure to hear of it.

"Yours faithfully,

"F. STARR, Esq."

"WILLIAM HOWITT.

"West Hill Lodge, Highgate, October 8, 1866.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I would not undertake to say that this man's or the other's communications from the spiritual world are divine, for undoubtedly many of them are not; but I *do* say, the institution is divine, being that of and by God, for the spiritual intercourse of mankind in all ages and nations, and in which they are allowed the same freedom of action as in all the rest of their spiritual and moral discipline. Through this opening, all the prophets, patriarchs, and saints have received their illuminations and strength, and through it the Devil has poured all his poisons. It depends on every individual whether he cultivates the good or the evil in spirit. If Spiritualists do not seek to and preach Christ crucified, they are wrong and out of the way, as too many are. For ourselves, Spiritualism at once brought us out of Unitarianism, and from it we have received the most admirable Christian teaching and Christian consolation possible. Amidst all the follies and extravagancies of Spiritualism, it has firmly proved the existence of a spiritual world and life—a thing of the grandest importance, amidst all the negative, empty faith of the churches, and the active and positive materialism of the scientific and literary world.

"Of course the political and man-made churches and sects will reject your 'Vision' and 'Voice.' *Such things would revolutionise the whole of their easy-going system* of mere words and much pay, and send their doctrinal chaff to the winds; but we all see where the churches are going; they are tumbling to pieces from mere rottenness; and spiritual life, being the life and power of God, will assuredly rise up and assert itself, when the rottenness of man's system is complete.

"I don't think you and I need pursue this subject. We are both convinced of the truth of our experiences; only, I say, don't let us condemn anything, without having a full knowledge of it. Hoping to hear you are well engaged in business, and keeping your experiences for your own solid benefit, or for that of any one willing to listen to them, I am, yours faithfully,

"WILLIAM HOWITT.

"P. S.—'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Whether your inspirations or mine are divine, will be easily detected by their results. If they teach us to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbours as ourselves, they will sufficiently affiliate themselves; nobody need dispute about them. Your sincerity and mine, I think, sufficiently attests itself, for neither of us have sought or found worldly *advantage* in them, but the *certainly of the contrary*."

The truth of this last remark I can fully endorse, for I firmly believe that, had I pursued my old occupation as a commercial traveller, I could have earned more money in a month than I am likely to realise by either book-making or lecturing in twelve; but, as I said at the outset, I have felt myself "called" to the work; and, let the results be whatever they may, I cheerfully resign myself to them. I have had no other object in view than the benefit of my fellow men, and especially that class who are not in a position to give either time or money to books—mine,

unfortunately, being at such a price, that not one in a hundred can afford to purchase them, although they have been extensively circulated amongst more fortunate individuals—especially that class to which I may say I belong, and amongst whom I had many “*fast*” friends, in the *double* acceptation of the term ; and from whom I have had the satisfactory evidence my warnings have not been without effect, many of them having confessed to me, my writings had made “the study of the Bible a source of pleasure and profit” to them ; and that these lectures may have the same effect on those I may hereafter address on the subject is the *spur* and *motive* by which I am actuated. I am neither surprised nor disappointed at the absence of the wealthier portions of my fellow citizens at these lectures, as I think I can say, without gasconade, there is scarcely an individual to whom I am personally known, and with whom I am on terms of speaking acquaintance, but has my works, and, consequently, are familiar with all I have to say upon these subjects. At the same time, there are many, whom I find it far more difficult and expensive to get at, who are in entire ignorance about them ; and hence my efforts have been directed to obtain the necessary funds to complete this course of lectures. If I can publish them afterwards, so as to come within the reach of the working classes, I will do so, as they will contain all, in a short space, that I can bring forward in support of the doctrine they are intended to teach and, to some extent, inaugurate.

I will now proceed to make extracts from this VISION, as it was presented to me, whilst I was under what is termed “an aberration of intellect,” and for which I was subjected to incarceration in a madhouse, kept without meat or drink three days and three nights, and suffered the treatment I have characterised as brutal, heartless, and indefensible, because I *knew* and *felt* at the time it was *altogether unnecessary*. At the same time, I am free to confess that, through its agency, I was brought to a “knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus Christ,” and by which alone salvation can be obtained. Hence, to bitterly complain about it would be about as reasonable as a man would be thought who railed at his saviour from drowning, because he had pulled him out by the hair of his head. But, for my children’s sake, I indignantly repudiate the imputation of insanity, as heartily as I

despise the authors of the calumny. I should observe that "Visions," although not recognised by the Protestant Church as communications of intelligence, divine or otherwise, are hailed with rapture by the Roman Catholic Church ; and if my *teaching* had been in that direction, although contrary to my own judgment, I should certainly have gone over to that church ; but this vision of 1850 clearly sets forth the *errors* of that church, and THE FALL OF THE PAPACY, "The Voice" declaring their forms and ceremonies to be erratic, and further directed me to offer my worship in the Church of England, where its forms and ceremonies are of the simplest character ; and that such would be established on earth at the second coming of Christ as one universal "Catholic and Apostolic Church," in which the whole world would believe. (Vide page 116, "The Cross.")

It would be occupying too much time to read the whole details of this visitation, and perhaps not interest you, although to *me* they are full of interest, especially the *prophetic* portions, communicated by this "voice," and the signs given, as one by one I have lived to see them realised. I will therefore select only those portions of the "vision" that are descriptive of the "coming Millennium." Spiritualists account for the state in which I then was under the term *psychology*, viz. the soul leaving the body. Paul, you will remember, in giving his account of being translated to the "third heaven," where he "heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful (expedient, otherwise translated) for a man to utter," said he could not tell whether it was in the body, or out of the body ; neither can I. I only *suppose* such was the case, for although suffering much previously from the brutal treatment I had received, and bound down with leather and iron, during this period I felt no pain of body whatever, but my mind was operated on to an extent that became *extatic*, throughout that day and the next, for I heard the sound of stringed instruments, and a large band of choristers, as distinctly as I ever heard an oratorio in my life ; now and then a solo sung by a clear full voice, that kept me as it were in enchantment. Then suddenly there appeared before me a panoramic vision, in which were actors, and actresses, beautiful scenery, life like, and almost close enough to touch. Then it changed ; the whole features of the scene assuming one of general devastation ; towers dismantled, buildings

toppled down, railroads broken up, and the electric telegraph destroyed ; broken vestiges of machinery, a scene of misery, desolation and destruction ; all of which has been since realised in the *American* and *Continental wars* we are certain of ; but whether such will be the attendant circumstances of our Saviour's advent, I am not prepared to say (but all interpreters of prophecy concur on one point, viz. that that advent will be preceded by "GREAT TRIBULATION") ; for again the scene changed to one beautifully placid and rural, with comfortable farm houses, surrounded by fields of golden corn, ripe for the sickle, happy groups of men, women, and children, who seemed to have nothing to do but to enjoy themselves ; labour in its excessive term had ceased, it was no longer by the sweat of the brow, but simple easy employment. Then again came sweet and pleasing strains of music, soft and swelling on my rapt senses, till daylight dispersed the vision of the night, bringing with it a continuation of its glories. I then saw before me a long procession, in which all the army of heaven joined, angels and archangels, horses and chariots of burnished gold, myriads of souls clad in white garments, others marching in gorgeous apparel, and such an overwhelming whole, that no tongue or pen could do justice to it, in the midst of which, the door of my cell was opened ; but I neither turned my head nor looked, otherwise than as directed, "the voice" having instructed me to keep my eyes fixed upon a certain point ; but I heard talking either Mr. Nichols or Dr. Gibson (the doctors of the establishment) ; one of them said, "Let him alone till to-morrow ;" and what struck me most forcibly at the time was, that they (the doctors, and those who accompanied them) did not see the same things that *I* did ; being as clear to my sight as the audience I now see before me. But if I take Paul's account in Acts ix. 7, I find those who were with him, on that memorable occasion of his journey to Damascus, saw no man, nor does it appear that they saw the light, but they heard "the voice ;" Paul both *saw* and heard. But if I turn to Daniel's account, in the 10th chap. 7th verse, I find it written, "And I Daniel alone saw the vision ; for the men that were with me saw not the vision." Here then is an evidence that such things as I have attempted to describe as present to *my* sight may take place, and yet not be present to the eye of another looking on at the same time. And

if it should appear, to you my hearers, incongruous, that under such circumstances and humiliating position, as I was then placed in, matters of such grave importance should be revealed, just read for yourselves the 9th and 10th verses of this same chapter, and you will find "the voice" addressing Daniel in quite as *humiliating a position*, as I was in at the time: "And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my *knees*, and on the *palms of my hands*; and he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee," &c. And in fact, all throughout the Bible, where these extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit have been given, they have been accompanied by an incongruity of circumstances, and humiliation of the body operated upon, lest the possessors of that body "should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations." I have felt mine so acutely, that I assure you if I could in any way quiet my conscience by remaining silent, I should prefer to do so; but as I cannot, I must weary you still further, if so be you are content to listen. The narrative proceeds:—

"So they shut the door, and the glorious vision was continued throughout the day; I had neither hunger, nor thirst, having been without food since the previous Monday, and it was now Wednesday, for my eyes were feasted with such splendid sights, that I had no thought for the body. Seated on clouds, I saw a multitude no man could number, some with harps in their hands, and others with different instruments of music, praising God. I lay in this state for some time, when a portion of the vision relating to the fall of the papacy was presented to my sight, which I pass over now, but which you will find in the work itself at page 125, and come to that part of it which to my mind is far more significant than popes or prelates, or any denomination of professing Christianity; for as I wondering lay upon my bed of straw, I saw a figure descend from heaven, as described by John in the book of Revelation, 'like unto the Son of Man,' in clouds, accompanied by a host of angels clothed in white, and I asked, 'What meaneth this?' the voice replied, 'It is the Millennium; I am coming to judge the earth; note what thou seest.' (What was distinctly meant by the word Millennium, I most assuredly knew nothing of at that time, being, only a few days previously, as complete an Infidel as any Unitarian existing,

although not an Atheist.) But immediately I heard the sound of wailing and lamentation and woe, the shrieks of women and children, as I saw them rushing from their houses, some frantically precipitating themselves from the top windows of their habitations, men running to and fro, calling on heaven for mercy, others raving mad, tearing their hair ; amidst which ‘ Gabriel,’ the destroying angel, was slaying with a bright and flaming sword in all directions, the city itself in flames in several parts, and the inhabitants flying away like affrighted deer ; realising that passage in Revelation vi. 15 and 16, ‘ And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains ; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb : for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand ?’ But I pass on from this and other devastating scenes, to that which followed—premising that before the Millennial state of happiness begins on earth, there will be JUDGMENT, and to those who are not in Christ in that day, when he shall ‘ make short work on the earth,’ that judgment will be *terrible* in its nature. May God in his mercy grant that all to whom these words come, both now and hereafter, may be found amongst his accepted ones. ‘ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.’

“ Then, after a while, I saw the whole city was in commotion ; processions without end ; the day of rejoicing was come, and thousands upon thousands were running to and fro, half frantic with joy : men and women embracing each other, old men and women, young men and maidens, children of both sexes, all with their faces lit up with joy and gladness : there was to be no more woe, no more pain, the good time had come, Christ had been acknowledged. Satan was bound for a thousand years, and sorrow and sighing was done away—Christ had wiped away all tears from off all faces, and pain and anguish was to be no more. The day of rejoicing had come to be called ‘ The Millennial Celebration,’ for which preparation was being made, each man vieing with his neighbour how he could best promote the universal joy ; waggons I saw, and all kinds of vehicles, loaded with

fruits and vegetables, and edibles of all descriptions ; public balls I saw, and rejoicings of all kinds, many of them extravagant in their nature, for many experienced so great an excess of happiness, that they died under its influence—reminding me of words I had somewhere read,

‘ If I my Spirit did let go,  
JOY would sooner kill than WOE.’”

This is but an imperfect and brief sketch of this three days’ and nights’ “visitation,” and a still more imperfect view of the state in which the inhabitants of this world will be, when under the government of its Divine King ; and to supply that deficiency, I have taken the liberty to extract from the works of another author, what his views are under the authority of Scripture of “The Coming Millennium ;” and as he is a clergyman of the Church of England of long standing, and has deeply studied the subject, perhaps it will have more weight with you than my imperfect description from “sight and sound.” But ere I quote from that work, “The Last Vials,” I would ask you my friends, or any reasonable man, whether such things as these I have attempted to describe as present to my faculties of sight and sound, could by possibility be the effect of “IMAGINATION,” when as I tell you I was in complete ignorance of the Scriptures, with the exception of the historical portions I had read when a mere child, and which were indelibly impressed on my memory ; and further, whether I should *now*, in the maturity of my age and experience of this world, religiously adhere to the truth of my statements ? “God is not mocked,” and “that which a man soweth he will assuredly reap.” This I am fully convinced of ; therefore, if I am endeavouring to palm on you, and the world generally, that which I know to be a deliberate LIE, what will my portion be in that hereafter I am now hastening to ? For what saith the Holy One ? “A LIAR shall not tarry in my sight.”

But let us see what this writer has to say on this head ; and when I tell you as a writer he has been before the world for the last two and twenty years, I think he is entitled to be looked on as authority, and he says—

“We need not doubt that the benefits conferred by the government of heaven, will soon reconcile the world at large to

the once unwelcome change. High above Jerusalem will be seen the heavenly city, glowing with celestial light, and immortalising heat. The light will be uncreated light, from the immediate presence of God. (Rev. xxi.) The warmth and light from the face of God will descend into the air, and speed along over all the atmosphere of the globe. The climates of the earth will insensibly be changed; the human body will feel the change, and become immortalised; vegetation will improve sevenfold, both in quantity and quality, and health and prosperity will extend over the world. The influence of that light, will cheer the heart as well as the eyes, and those dull and sordid passions, which are engendered by the dreary climates of the present world, will melt away and vanish in the celestial sunshine. Men shall then walk indeed in the light of God's countenance, and that HOLY LIGHT shall give a cast of holiness to every object on which it falls. Every visible thing will remind men of God, because it will be seen literally in the 'light of his countenance.' Then shall even the sun be confounded, and the moon ashamed, when the glory of the Lord shall shine down from the heavenly city, with its pure uncreated light, transcending all the light of the sun and stars, and still more, all the boasted lights of human invention. We are fully convinced that the light described in Isaiah and the book of Revelation, is literally the UNCREATED light, that literally shines from the face of God and the Lamb; and by means of such light from the heavenly city, the whole climate and vegetation of the earth will be improved beyond description, and the human frame strengthened, immortalised, and made beautiful.

"The world being thus filled with health and beauty, will soon learn to acquiesce in the government of the divine King. Prosperity has never yet been known upon earth, because the earth has been governed by weak and sinful men. A few are prosperous; the bulk of every nation is infamously wretched, our own nation the most wretched of all nations.

"That *odious slavery* that is imposed upon so many in our present state of society, *that slavery*, which we nickname *industry*, will cease for ever, and be succeeded by that true industry, which leaves men time to spare for the reasonable pleasures of life, and yet is sufficient to procure them whatever is necessary to render life worthy of the name. The present state of the working

classes is not LIFE, it is *abject bondage*, scarcely worthy of being called existence, but certainly not life.

“The poverty of our labouring classes, is at this moment absolutely *infamous*. Do you think that the Lord of Glory will allow His subjects to toil on in half starvation till they are old, and then send them out of sight to die in an union workhouse? Selfish heartless men can do this, and then expatiate on the blessings of liberty, and the ‘rich provisions of gospel truth,’ the ‘feast of fat things’ which we enjoy : *their* feast of fat things being in reality a feast of literal ‘fat things,’ provided for themselves by cooks and confectioners, and guarded from all intrusion of the poor ! But the kingdom of heaven will not be a heartless kingdom, it will not flatter the rich and leave the poor to slavery and starvation : it will control the rich, and elevate the poor ; it will humble the proud, and exalt the humble ; it will be a kingdom of miraculous power, as well as imperial authority, and will govern not only man, but the course of nature itself. And the course of nature will be so altered, that every man shall enjoy the all reviving light of the heavenly city, and every one shall find within his reach, the comforts, and the leisure which make life worthy of the name—*yet not with idleness*. Idleness is a sin, and every man will be required to work that he may eat ; but with this difference, that whereas *now* men are forced to work too much, and to eat too little, *then* men will work, and eat, just what nature requires, for a state of bodily and mental perfection.”

This is man’s feeble description of the Millennial time, but what says the inspired word of God ? See Isaiah xi. : “ And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots ; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the Lord ; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord ; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears ; but with righteousness shall he judge the *poor*, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth ; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he *slay the wicked*. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness

the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid ; and the calf and the fatling together : and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed ; their young ones shall lie down together ; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox ; and the suckling shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain ; for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." "And in that day," says Zachariah, " shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD." "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

Is not this, my friends of the working class, a state of things to be hoped for, and prayed for, and above all to be *prepared* for ? We do not know for *certain* when we may expect this consummation of all our toils and disappointments, but that time will most assuredly come ; and if we do not *know when*, it is something to know what we may *hope* for with *certainly*, FOR THE MOUTH OF THE LORD BY HIS HOLY PROPHETS HATH SPOKEN IT.

You will say, perhaps, all this has been promised and spoken of for so long a time, that we despair ever realising them ourselves, or our children's children, and therefore think no more of it than we should do, if it had been told us from a pulpit, as it has been all our lives long. But do you not remember the old saying, " Coming events cast their shadows before them," and is not this " vision " I have read you, a portion from one of those shadows ? Besides, if you know of a certainty that a legacy, for instance, will be your inheritance, or your heir's, at the death of a certain individual, are you not all the more comfortable in the thought, that individual is so advanced in years, he or she cannot possibly live long ; and do you not begin to feel you are already in possession of it ? So think, and feel, and hope, and pray, and when you leave this hall and arrive at your domiciles, before you retire to rest, close your doors, and pray earnestly, " Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly ! " That prayer only requires to be *UNIVERSAL*, and then the end would come, for " the knowledge of the Lord would then cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea."

I must now draw to a conclusion, and as I have made my own "experiences" the basis of my remarks generally (for, but for them, I should never have been known either as an author or a speaker), I have both written and spoken freely on these subjects, to my own cost and detriment in the world, without the least ambiguity that I am aware of, in fact, as many of you are aware, I am in the habit of speaking plainly, rather too plain sometimes, that it positively becomes UGLY. It is my misfortune, and for that reason look upon myself as a dangerous person to be trusted with knowledge, especially if it is to screen another from exposure to DESERVED *ridicule and contempt*.

What, therefore, I have to say in conclusion on this head is this: whether these "experiences" be "delusion" or not, in the opinion of others, *I* cannot recognise them as such, any more than I can think it "delusion" that I am addressing a number of intelligent men and women, who can think for themselves. One thing is certain, it has taught *me* that which the "foolishness of preaching" had failed to do, for upwards of thirty years of my life; not because the preaching I heard was "foolishness" (which in the scriptural acceptation of the word means simplicity, although I *have* heard much foolishness from pulpits), but because my eyes and my ears had not been properly, or as it may be said, spiritually opened; that is, opened by the *Spirit* to acknowledge and believe such doctrines as the Trinity, and the incarnation of our Blessed Lord and Saviour. If this be "delusion," I say with as hearty a good will, and much more so, than the Rev. Aubrey Price the other night said, "Thank God for Oliver Cromwell." I say, God be praised for such a "delusion," and if on the other hand, it be "Spiritualism," as Mr. Howitt and the gentleman whose letter I have read say it is, then I say with all my heart and soul, God be thanked for "Spiritualism," if it sends us in the right direction, as I think it has sent me; viz. to become a devout worshipper in our mother Church, where its services are wisely and properly administered without *monkeyana*, or *monasticism*: then I say, let Spiritualists do the same, so that Spiritualism comes to clergymen duly ordained, and not let clergymen go over to "Spiritualism" or Spiritualists to partake of the folly of *worshipping* unseen spirits, or join in the mad freaks of dancing tables; and then, sir, we might indulge in the hope that the present

anomalous state of Alma Mater, might resolve itself more into its primitive simplicity, and by the earnest and energetic appeals of evangelical clergymen, win souls to Christ, who are now wandering they scarcely know whither. Whether this "voice" be divine or not, I shall ever pay respect to it, and observe all that it has told me to say and do, even should it prove after all to have been

"Vox et præterea nihil,"

as you, Mr. Chairman, would classically render it, and not the "Vox DEI" I have deluded myself to believe it. I have no doubt it has puzzled and perplexed many, and especially ministers, for if such teaching becomes *universal*, they may say, with the jealous "Moor of Venice,"

"Othello's occupation's gone;"

for, you may depend upon it, one so taught will never go to a place of worship to hear the Scriptures and prayers read with a conventional drawl, and nasal twang; nor would they sit in a cold church (generally the coldest part of it appropriated to the poor), to hear a drowsy sermon of twenty minutes, which touches on nothing but mere platitudes, which they have been acquainted with since childhood; and if this will not rouse ministers to exertion, you may call it "the poor man's church" as long as you like, but you may depend upon it very few, if any, will enter into it; and it really is no matter of surprise to me that an intelligent working man should on a Sunday prefer, like the "melancholy Jaques," to walk the woods and fields, reading—

"Sermons in stones, books in the running brooks,"

to a cold seat, in a cold damp church, to listen to such platitudes as, in nineteen cases out of twenty, are doled out, according to time, from a country pulpit; making, in this case, your own, sir, as an exception; for when a Ranter will close his chapel doors when it is known you are going to preach, and recommend his congregation to follow his example and come and hear you, I think it is evidence enough that *Spiritualism of the right sort* is the attracting power.

I have no desire to rail against other ministers or "the

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Church," as it is called, nor her system ; for we have, I am happy to say, here in Norwich, many very excellent men, truly evangelical, very hard worked, and *very* badly paid. But, sir, if you had the same opportunities I have had in different parts of England of hearing how the word of God has been expounded and delivered, by men who live at ease, with little work and large pay, who love fox-hunting and feasting better than fasting and praying, you would not think I am harsh in my remarks ; and the more especially as I believe the day is fast approaching they *preach* about, but *do not believe*.

I have little more to say, sir. I am like Dr. Cumming ; I have exhausted all I have to say on the subject ; but I do not, like him, prognosticate a time *when* we shall realise these fore-shadowed events ; nor do I follow in the wake of the Rev. M. Baxter, in the declaration that 1872 will be the culminating point, notwithstanding the singular coincidence of the passage in my book relative to that year. What I say is, " Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation ; " for many will wonder, I have no doubt, when that day comes, that, as believers, they are not amongst the number " caught up in the air, to be for ever with the Lord ; " but the after-thought will very soon relieve them of the wonder ; for whilst they have been *thinking* they have given their *hearts* to the Lord (*and you may depend upon it He will have for his elect body-guard none others*), they will find their *hearts* have been given to the world, in some shape or other. The young man who " went away exceeding sorrowful, because he had great possessions," will be their case, notwithstanding He who asked for their *hearts* had laid down His own *life* for their sakes.

But I dare not trust myself to speak on the LOVE that I KNOW Christ has for poor suffering humanity ; at all events, at present, I have not got sufficient nerve, for I seldom enter upon the subject but there is generally something the matter with my " speckle-sticks," as my little grandson calls them, and my voice gets thick and husky, so that I cannot say what I would, although I can write about it. That province I consider to belong to the ordained ministers of the Gospel, of which, sir, you are one,—the right man in the right place, whether it is in that chair or in your pulpit at Ashfield,—and I leave to you this attentive

audience for the concluding remarks of these, I fear, wearisome and lengthy lectures.

But I cannot conclude without declaring it to be my firm conviction, wholly apart from any "experience" of my own, or that of any other individual or individuals, that the civilised world, as well intellectually and morally, as socially and politically, is in the midst of a great crisis (though it seems scarcely permissible to say that it is a crisis), infinitely more serious than even we, who are already experiencing from it different consequences, believe it ourselves to be; and I am not alone in this conviction, by many profound thinkers and writers, as you may soon satisfy yourselves upon by reading M. Guizot's last work, "*Meditations on the Actual State of Christianity*," in which you will find the question of "Spiritualism" considered philosophically, and perhaps lead you to think of and inquire more into it, than my feeble attempts to elicit "*from WHENCE and WHAT is it?*"

The Rev. Chairman concluded with a short address, and the doxology having been sung, the meeting dispersed.